

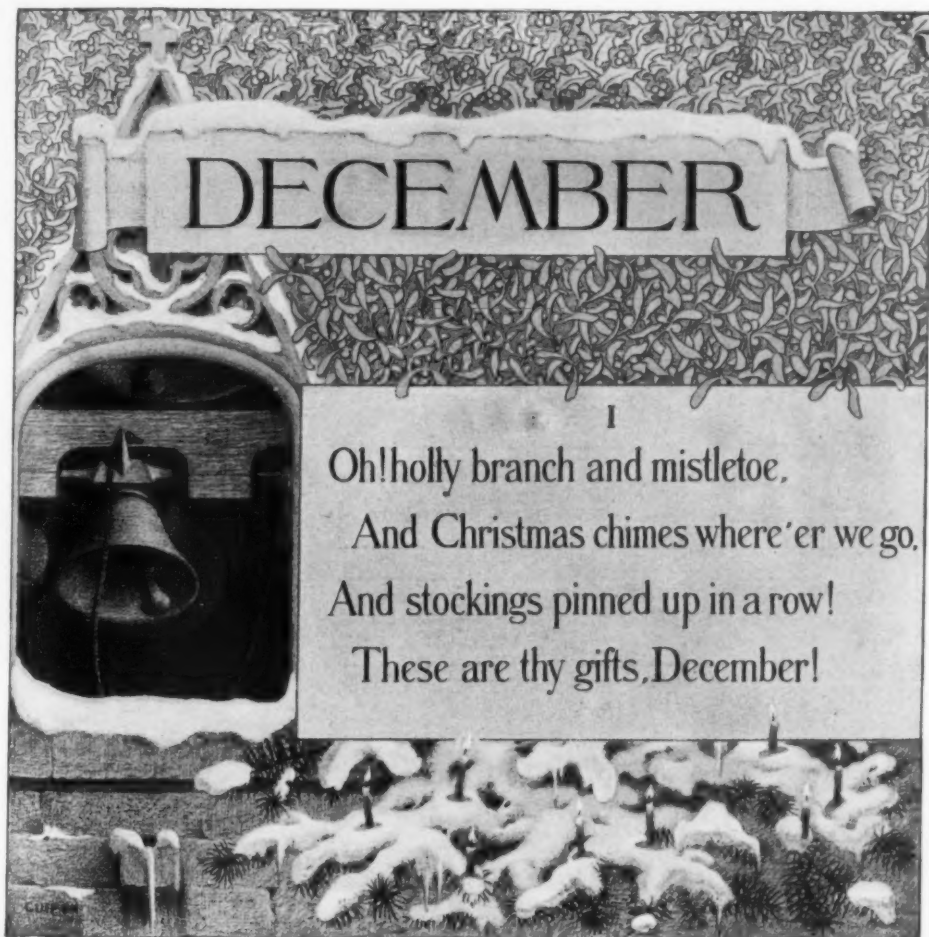
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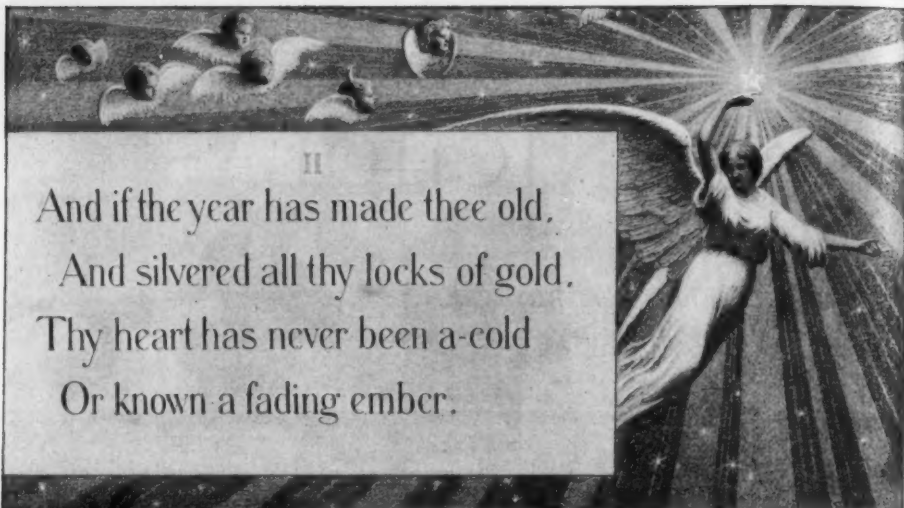
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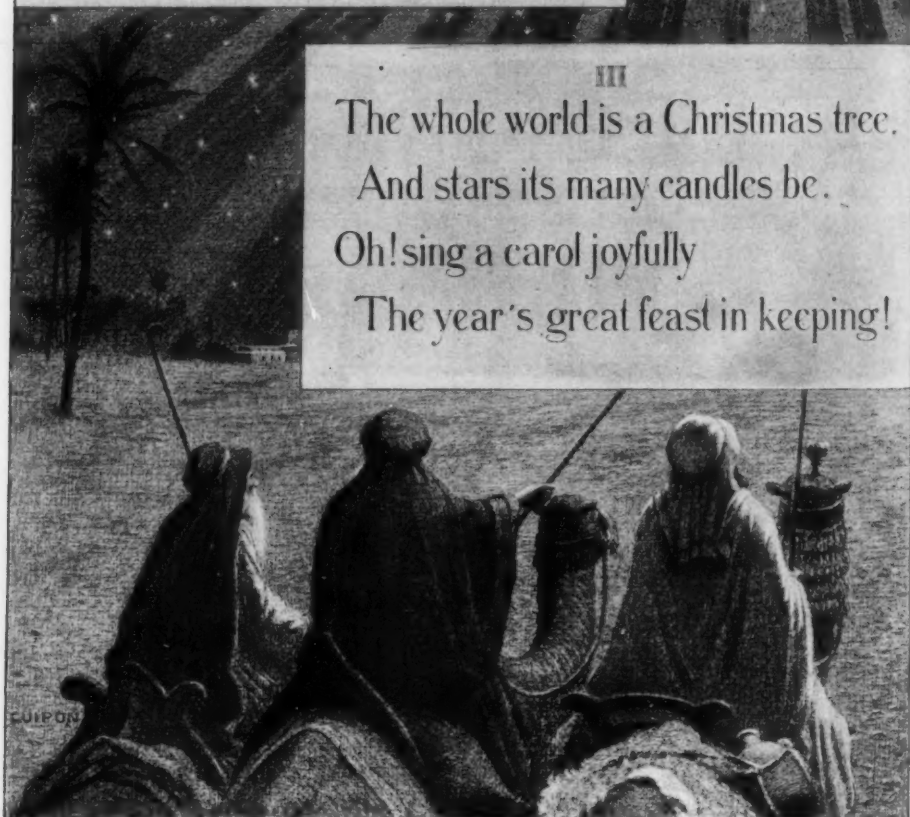
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II

And if the year has made thee old,
And silvered all thy locks of gold,
Thy heart has never been a-cold
Or known a fading ember.



III

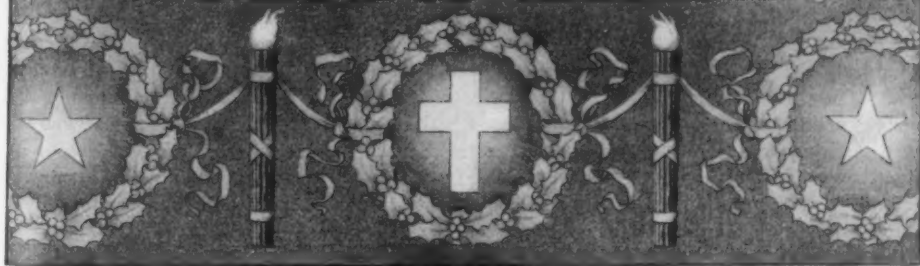
The whole world is a Christmas tree,
And stars its many candles be.
Oh! sing a carol joyfully
The year's great feast in keeping!



IV

For, once, on a December night
An angel held a candle bright,
And led three wise men by its light
To where a child was sleeping.

Harriet F. Blodgett.



SANTA CLAUS' PATHWAY.

BY JULIA W. MINER.

SNOW everywhere — not the city snow, which is so quickly trampled down and smirched, and which one gladly sees carried off in carts, certain of its swift transformation to slush and mud, but the clean, white, lasting country snow. It covered the paths, the roads, the fields, lying in great drifts against the buildings and fences; each low roof had its frozen white covering, fringed here and there with icicles; the mountains were gray to their tree-clothed summits, matching the gray sky, whence tiny flakes fell now and again.

Over the fields trudged Nan and Ned, caring nothing for snow or drifts; for on their feet were strapped big snow-shoes, and they scuffled along securely enough.

"First fall!" cried Ned, as Nan, inadvertently pointing her big shoe into the snow, stuck, and settled hastily and ungracefully on the ground.

"Give me your hand, Neddy. What a stupid I am!" Up she scrambled, shaking the white powder from her scarlet toboggan-suit. With the thermometer at ten degrees, there is little fear of dampness from a tumble into a drift.

"Now for a race," said Ned; "I'll give you a start, and beat you to the little bridge."

"Thank you for nothing. You need n't give me a start, my boy, but I'll beat you just the same. Ready!"

Off scuffled the two, Nan with a careful remembrance that her feet must be kept flat.

"Good for you, Nan!" Ned said, as his sister kept close by him. "It'll be nip and tuck, sure enough."

Suddenly the boy's toe struck a projecting rock. Over he went, while Nan, at that moment a little in advance, pushed on unseeing. Arrived, triumphant, at the goal, she turned to look for her opponent. Half-way back sprawled a dark-gray figure; a handkerchief fluttered from one elevated foot, while close to this flag of truce stood two childish figures.

Back rushed the victor.

"Oh, Ned! Not hurt, are you?"

"Oh, no; just resting. Strap's broken. Sorry I can't rise and bow and congratulate you, ma'am. It *was* nip and tuck, was n't it? I got nipped and you tuck it." And the vanquished one sat up and proceeded to mend his snow-shoe with some string. Having offered her handkerchief and a further store of cord produced from her own pocket, Nan turned her attention to the new-comers — a boy of about her own age, and a girl several years younger.

"Good morning," she said pleasantly.

"Morning," said the girl, in a low voice.

"You're strangers in the village, are n't you?"

"Yes, we are. Father's here for his health; we've just come. Mother's going to take in washing, 'cause father can't work now."

"Find it rather cold, don't you?" said Ned.

"Yes, it's awful cold; but Father likes it, and the doctor says it's good for him."

"That's so. You see, we know all about it, for we've always lived here. We're the doctor's children." And Nan nodded pleasantly to the two, noting their coarse yet neat clothing, and their somewhat sad young faces.

"You're lucky to be here for the first snow," said Ned, scrambling up, and stamping to test his new fastenings. "And Christmas makes everybody feel jolly."

"We're not going to have any Christmas this year," the girl said.

"Can't help yourselves, I guess," was Ned's cheerful reply. "December twenty-fifth brings it every time, and that's to-morrow, sure pop!"

"Gerty means we can't have presents," joined in the boy. "But we don't mind, do we, sis? It costs a lot to get them, and it cost so much to get here, we can't hang up our stockings. We always have before, though," he added quickly.

"Dave's real good, but I can't help minding

some. I wish Christmas did n't come so expensive," she sighed after a pause, during which Nan and Ned had looked at them in silence.

"Where do you live?" asked Nan at last.

"Down that road there, 'longside o' the river, beyond the pines. First there 's a blue house, and ours is the second pink one." (Houses of many colors flourished in the little mountain village.) "Dave tried coasting down that funny open place there in the pines; it looks like a V turned upside down. He tried it on a board, and he stuck; it was too soft."

"Oh, that 's Santa Claus' Pathway," laughed Nan. Then, as the strangers stared, "That 's what we were told when we were little. You see, Santa Claus is the only person who can coast down it; I suppose the reindeer understand the road. And sometimes they run down so quickly that things drop out of the sleigh. Ned and I looked for them when we were small. Did n't we?"

"Yes, indeed; many a time. Well, good-by, youngsters. Come along, Nan."

Left alone, Gerty and Dave looked at each other a moment.

"Is n't she a beauty?" said Gerty at last, with a long-drawn sigh. "And, oh, Davy, let 's go there and look to-morrow; will you?"

The boy laughed. "Yes, if you like," said he. "But don't expect anything; it 's only a story."

Nan's spirits were low that afternoon. The thought of the two "new" children troubled her, and she knew of nothing she could do, for her last penny had been spent in her girlish Christmas preparations, and all her available cast-off things had been contributed already to the various big packages that

her kind mother made up for the poorer village folk at this time. A talk with Ned brought no balm to her spirit; like her, he was penniless. "Dead broke, my dear, and no use. Father 's advanced some of my January allowance already. But we might ask him."

"No, we must n't. Mother told me he 's given away more than he can afford now. It 's hard times for him, too. I don't see why it makes any difference with a doctor, Neddy. People have to be sick just the same," she said reflectively.

Ned offered no explanation, so Nan retreated to her own pretty room to look, for the twentieth time, at the dainty, ribbon-tied packages she had prepared for the morrow. "It must be just horrid not to have any Christmas fun," she thought again.



"GOOD FOR YOU, NAN!" NED SAID, AS HIS SISTER KEPT CLOSE BY HIM. "IT 'LL BE NIP AND TUCK, SURE ENOUGH."

The next day dawned bright and sunny and crisp, a perfect Christmas morning. The doctor's household was stirring betimes, for the four stockings with their abundant overflow must be inspected at an early hour, and Ned and Nan, youthful tyrants on that day, tapped early at their parents' door. Who does not know the fun of rummaging a Christmas stocking!

According to their usual custom, Dr. Lowe looked at his gifts first, being, as Ned said, "the oldest child." And few of his patients would have recognized their grave physician, as he guessed and peeped, and pulled out the presents, as eagerly as any boy. Nor was Mrs. Lowe one whit less excited when her turn followed.

"Mother and father are two spoiled children," said Ned, laughing, and casting a suspicious glance at the large package that leaned against the fireplace close to his own stocking—could it be the wished-for toboggan? "They have so many presents, they will get to be like the little girl who had Christmas every day." For the doctor's family was remembered by nearly everybody in the village.

"What a beauty! Oh, father, how did you know I wanted it so?" cried the boy, as the new toboggan was unwrapped and admired.

Down in his stocking's deepest depths Ned found a tiny box, "From Grandma Lowe." Nan looked on with interest, for the shining five-dollar gold piece would, without doubt, have its double among her own gifts. And so it was. The girl's quick brain was busy with plans—a decision was reached at once; now the long-wanted gold beads could be bought!

Breakfast was soon over. Down the toboggan-slide and up again the children sped and clambered with untiring enjoyment. And who could grow weary of such a beauty as that new toboggan! Ned and Nan were fearless and sure of their balance, and neither could be brought to understand why their rapid rush, as they stood erect on their toboggan, from top to bottom of the snow-clad hill, was considered a difficult feat by their companions.

"Get on and have a slide," said Ned affably, noticing among the little group of onlookers the two strangers of the day before. "Hold on tight now. If you're not used to bumps,

you'll fly off." Down sped the four, Gerty's small shriek lost in the laughter her hasty rise and fall aroused. But Ned had grasped her quickly, so she was spared a tumble.

"You'll like it better next time, so let's try again," said he, encouragingly.

"We can't; there's the church bell, Ned," said Nan. "We must hurry."

As Nan stooped to tie a refractory shoe-lace, she overheard Dave say to Gerty:

"Now you've had a Christmas treat, you see, Gerty, even if we did n't find any dropped things on Santa Claus's Pathway."

Nan's toilet for church was hasty, but she and Ned were ready in time to follow their father and mother into the pretty little church, pine-trimmed and holly-decked; and Nan's clear voice rang out sweetly when the congregation sang the Christmas hymn:

"Peace to the earth, good will to man,
From heaven's all-gracious King:"
The earth in solemn stillness lay,
To hear the angels sing.

Over in the corner sat Gerty and Dave. They were singing, too, and once Nan saw Gerty stop and furtively wipe her eyes.

"O ye, beneath life's crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,"

sang Nan, as she wondered. Now the meaning of the words came to her. She had not thought of it before. Girls of thirteen do not always.

The doctor's daughter did not listen to the sermon. Her Christmas sermon had been preached to her in that first hymn, and she was thinking it over seriously and not without some inward struggles. Poor Gerty and Dave! A sick father, a poor hard-working mother,—Nan stole a look at her own strong, handsome, well-dressed parents, then glanced once more at the sad-looking pair in the corner. And for them there was, as Gerty had said, "no Christmas."

"But the village shops close early Christmas day, and they have so few nice things in them, anyhow," whispered a selfish little spirit in her heart. "And Grandma Lowe *meant* you to buy something for yourself with that money."



"NED DREW BACK, LETTING DAVE FULL OUT THE SCARLET SLED."

There was a little rustle as the congregation rose for the recessional:

O holy Child of Bethlehem!
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sins, and enter in,
Be born in us to-day.

Nan wiped away some tears from her own eyes as she dropped on her knees.

"Ned, I want to speak to you," she whispered, almost dragging him down the church steps as the congregation filed out.

"Those Lowe children are never happy long under a roof," laughed somebody, as the two ran off on the board walk.

The pink house down by the river was not the most cheerful place in the world that

Christmas afternoon. Its few furnishings were not yet entirely unpacked; the big air-tight stove smelled of varnish; and the invalid, seated by the curtainless window, was having "one of his bad days." The poor man looked doleful enough. Sick and suffering, he felt himself the cause of his family's poverty.

"There comes the doctor's sleigh, with his pretty daughter," he said. "He rides in style. Why! It's stopping here!"

"Father sends the sleigh," began Nan, after the usual greetings, "and hopes you will like to take a little drive, as he is n't using it to-day."

The invalid glanced out at the beautiful black horses with their jingling bells and scarlet plumes, at the sleigh heaped with fur robes.

"Your father's too good, Miss," he stammered, his face flushing with pleasure.

"And perhaps Gerty and Dave might go coasting with us—Ned and me."

"Got on your boots, Dave?" queried Ned. "Then we'll go through the pines." He chatted merrily as they started off, the two girls cozily tucked up on the toboggan, the boys acting as steeds for the chariot.

Santa Claus's Pathway, like a big, white tent, stretched up by their side as they skirted the hill. "Hello!" said Ned, "er—we might climb up and see if—er—there's anything there; St. Nick might have dropped something."

"He did n't," said Gerty. "Dave and I looked." Ned and Dave exchanged glances.

"Try, try again," suggested Nan. "You and I'll go, too, Gerty. It is n't deep, and it's dry as dust."

Up scrambled the youthful quartet.

"Let me talk, Ned," said Nan. "You hesitate, and they'll suspect."

"Well, how can a fellow think up things all of a sudden?" whispered Ned in return, his tone expressing his injured feeling.

"Oh—oh! Why, look!" cried Gerty, pointing to a patch of red half hidden by the snow. "There! There! near that pine!"

The others ran forward, but Ned drew back, letting Dave pull out the scarlet sled that rewarded his search.

"Whew! That's a stunner!" cried Dave.

"How did it get here? Some one must have lost it."

"Santa Claus, to be sure," cried Nan; and Ned added: "'Finding's keepings.'"

"Do you really think so?" said Dave, wistfully, unable to believe his good fortune.

"Certain, sure," returned Ned. And, since his own hands had put it there, who could have known better?

"Somebody told me there was n't any Santa Claus, but I guess he's been here," said Gerty; and she nodded her head with satisfaction.

"See here!" she cried. "And they're marked 'Gerty.'" She held up a box containing a lovely warm hood, a pair of mittens, and a box of candies as she spoke.

"Oh, goody! goody!" cried the child. "And look! here's a game! We can play it evenings, Dave; and maybe father'd like it, too. But," she said quickly, "you ought to take something,—we must n't have them all."

"That would be unfair; we've had our presents this morning," replied Nan. "Prob'ly these things were left here for you, for maybe Santa Claus did n't know where you'd moved to." This explanation seemed to satisfy Gerty, and she began to search again with fresh interest.

"These must be yours, Dave." Ned held up some mittens just as Gerty cried:

"What a love-ily doll! Just to think it's mine. Oh, you dear dolly!"

"And here's a book with my name in it," called Dave in a few moments.

"I guess that's all," remarked Ned, after a few minutes' further search.

"Has n't it been scrumptious?" said Gerty to Nan, as they descended the hill. And Nan thought decidedly that it had been.

"Say," said Dave to Ned, as they waited for the two girls to get settled to their liking, one on the toboggan, the other on the newly found sled, "I'm pretty sure you and your sister put those things there. Gerty b'lieves in Santa Claus,—she's little, you see. But—I don't know how to say it—we're awful much obliged."

Tucked up warm and snug on the toboggan, Nan was softly singing, under her breath, a joyous Christmas carol.

PRESIDENT FOR ONE HOUR.

BY FRED P. FOX.

It was just eight o'clock as the passenger-train pulled out of the Wayville station on the morning of December 24, 1891. The train was heavily laden with merry people either bound for their Eastern homes, or gay holiday-shoppers going to the city to purchase the last supply of presents that were to make the coming day the happiest of the year.

The mail-car and express-cars were laden to overflowing with many queer-shaped packages, and even the spaces in the vestibules between the cars had to be utilized for through pouches and packages, so great was the jam of Christmas presents.

If it was a jolly crowd that left the little station, it was not an unhappy one that remained. The fog had so settled down upon and around everything that the little lamp in the telegraph and ticket office shed but a feeble light upon the persons seated around the stove. There is always a crowd in a country station at train-time, and in spite of the rules a few privileged persons always find their way into the office.

Merrily the telegraph instrument ticked away, sending its messages of hope or grief across a continent. As he sat beside the instrument, Fred Clarke, the operator, once in a while gave

out a bit of electric gossip to the entertained listeners. "No. 13 is five minutes late at Bloss," he remarked. Then he smiled as he said, "The general manager has just left High Ridge on his 'special,' coming west. He must



"WITH STEADY FINGERS HE GRASPED THE TELEGRAPH-KEY." (SEE PAGE 102.)

have a jolly party with him, for he has ordered fourteen dinners at Glenmore to be ready when he arrives there. His car will pass here at 9:10."

"What engine's pulling the 'special'?" asked Bob Ford, one of the listeners.

"No. 39."

"That's father's old engine," spoke up Tom Martin, a dark-eyed, dark-haired boy of fifteen



"THE MEN HAD OILED THE TRACK THOROUGHLY FOR SEVERAL HUNDRED YARDS."

years, who had been gazing intently into the fire. "He used to run her on all the specials, until he was killed in the accident at Oak Bridge two years ago."

"Right you are, lad," said Bob Ford; "and it's many the time I fired for him on old 39. He was as brave and as true a man as ever pulled a lever. You used to ride with us often too—did n't you, Tom?"

"Yes; until one day the general manager saw me sitting in the cab, and issued an order that after that day no one but regular employees in the discharge of their duty should ride upon the engines. I have never been on an engine since; but I learned a great deal about them—did n't I, Bob?"

"Yes, you did, Tom; and, for a boy, you can do as much about an engine as any youngster I know. I would rather have you around than many a fellow I know who's now running an engine. What are you doing now?"

"Since father's death I do whatever I can to help support my mother, and I find enough to keep me out of mischief. I attend night-school,

and during the day I carry the mail between the depot and town, carry dinners and lunches for the men, sell papers, and deliver messages. Besides, I am Fred's pupil, and have learned telegraphy."

"Are you making a living at all these odd jobs?"

"Yes, I am; but of course I can't make what father made; and we are trying to pay off the mortgage on the house. I do wish, though, I could do better. Here it is Christmas-time, and I have been saving money for three months—yes, six—in order to buy mother a nice warm cloak; but when I came to price them I found that the five dollars and a half I had saved would not get anything at all like what I wanted. It would take three dollars more, at least. How I would like to have surprised my dear old mother! But then, no matter; I can get her something else that's nice, and we will have a merry Christmas, anyway."

"You say you can telegraph," said Bob, after a moment; "what are the wires saying now?"

"The operator at High Ridge is asking

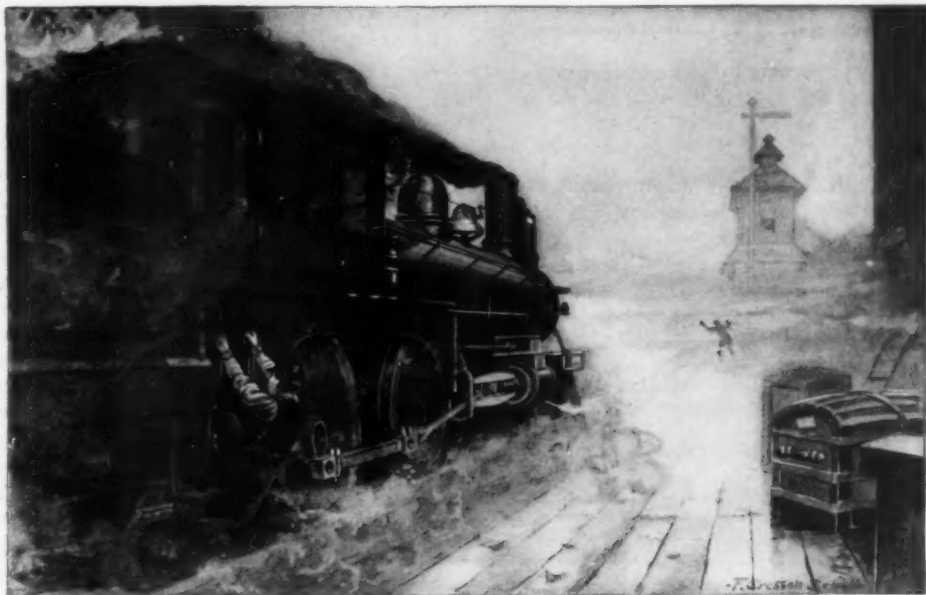
whether No. 14 left here on time.—What 's that?" he continued excitedly. "Keep still! Rockville is saying, 'Freight-train—No. 33—broke into three sections—at Cantwell. Engineer—thinking there was one break and that rear section was under control—started back to couple on. Dense fog—met middle section coming at full speed—engineer and fireman thrown from engine. Engine and three cars running east down-grade at full speed.' That 's terrible!" he said. "But listen—'Middle section, one mile behind, just passed—ten loaded stock-cars—Jack Flynn clinging to rear car. Must stop train if you can. If 14 has not yet left, switch her to west-bound track or she 'll be lost.'" Then the instrument stopped ticking.

"Is that right, Fred?" Bob asked the operator, as soon as he found his breath; "or has Tom been joking with us?"

"It 's all true!" answered Fred. "That 's

No. 14, the passenger-train that had just left, was bowling leisurely along at thirty miles an hour, crowded with passengers. Behind, and coming with resistless force, was a runaway engine and three cars, running sixty miles an hour, and behind that train was the heavy broken section, ten loaded stock-cars, coming nearly as fast.

There seemed to be no hope for the doomed passengers, since on the west-bound track the general manager's through-express was approaching. To attempt to switch the runaway engine or section would be likely to tear up the track, and the chances were that the loss of life would be just as great, if not greater, than to let the engine speed on its way. No wonder the men turned pale as they understood the situation of affairs—no wonder that the stoutest hearts stood still, for, as they reflected, horror seemed to pile on horror.



"HE GRASPED THE HANDLES AND SWUNG HIMSELF UP ON THE STEP."

just what 's happened! What shall we do? What *can* we do?"

There was no answer to this appeal. The blanched faces of the listeners showed that all understood the horror of the situation.

Then out of the gloom there came a steady voice: it seemed filled with an inspiration. It was an opportunity for the genius of a true "railroad man"; and the man, or rather boy, was there, ready to prove his capacity.

The boy Tom spoke up: "All of you men get out and oil the track,—pour on oil, put on grease, smear it with tallow, or anything! That will keep back the engine a little—perhaps enough. After the engine has passed, keep on with the work. Remember we've got to save Flynn's life—yes, and save the cattle, too."

The men at once ran out of the depot, Fred and Bob leading all the rest.

"Now, I must save No. 14!" said Tom to himself. "I'll have to keep the west-bound track clear, and then switch No. 14 on to it at Lewistown."

With steady fingers he grasped the telegraph-key, and this message flew along the wire:

Operator, Mount Vernon: Flag special train of general manager, and tell him to wait for orders. T. M.

Back came the inquiry:

T. M., Wayville: Who has right to stop special? Track has been cleared for the general manager's train. By whose orders shall I tell him he has been flagged?

It was no time to stick at trifles or to make explanations, so Tom flashed back the answer:

By orders of President of the U. S. R. R., per T. M.

"O. K.," answered Mount Vernon, as a sign that the order was understood and would be obeyed.

"Now, to get 14 switched from the east- to the west-bound track! There is just a chance." Again he touched the key.

Operator, Lewistown: Turn cross-over switch at your station; transfer passenger-train No. 14 from east- to west-bound track, and hold her there until released. T. M.

Then the key ticked in reply:

T. M., Wayville: Track has been cleared for special of general manager. His train approaching from east with regular orders giving right of way. Make your order more definite, and give authority.

As before, Tom was ready and answered:

Operator, Lewistown: President of U. S. R. R. Co. does not have to show authority. Carry out the orders at once. Important. T. M.

"O. K.," ticked back the reply.

"Now," said Tom to himself, "if I can only

delay the engine until 14 gets across on the other track, everything will be all right. The poor horses and cattle will have to take their chances. Let's see,—14 has been gone fifteen minutes; she is due at Lewistown in thirty minutes. The runaway engine will be here in about five minutes, unless her speed is reduced; the passenger-train will be overtaken about five miles this side of Lewistown. There is only one hope now. I must risk it."

Just then the ticket-agent, hearing the men hurrying about, had come down-stairs and asked the trouble. As briefly as he could, Tom told him the situation, and then said: "Mr. Lenox, I'm going to climb into the runaway engine, if it's a possible thing, and check her up. I've five dollars or so here. Take it and, if I'm hurt, give it to my mother. Tell her I was going to get her a Christmas present, and tell her I know that she would tell me to do just what I'm going to do. God bless her! If I come out all right—and there is a chance—don't ever let her know what I did. Promise, quick!"

"Don't think of such a thing, Tom," pleaded the agent. "Why, it's suicide! If you can slow down the engine, when you get aboard, the rear section will run into you and crush you. If you can't, you are sure to run into the passenger-train and die in the collision. In this fog, even if you get control of the engine—and I doubt if you can—you cannot tell what second you will be upon the passenger-train, or what second the other section will be upon you. You are the only support of your mother. Just as likely as not, you will be killed in your attempt to get on the engine. No one ever got on an engine going as fast as this one is; why, to try it is worse than suicide! Then the engine might blow up. You *must* not attempt it!"

"It's all very true, Mr. Lenox; but it's better to try, even if I fail, when so many lives will be lost unless an effort is made to save them. I am going to do all I can, and as for mother—why, God bless her! Good-by. I must get out on the platform to be ready."

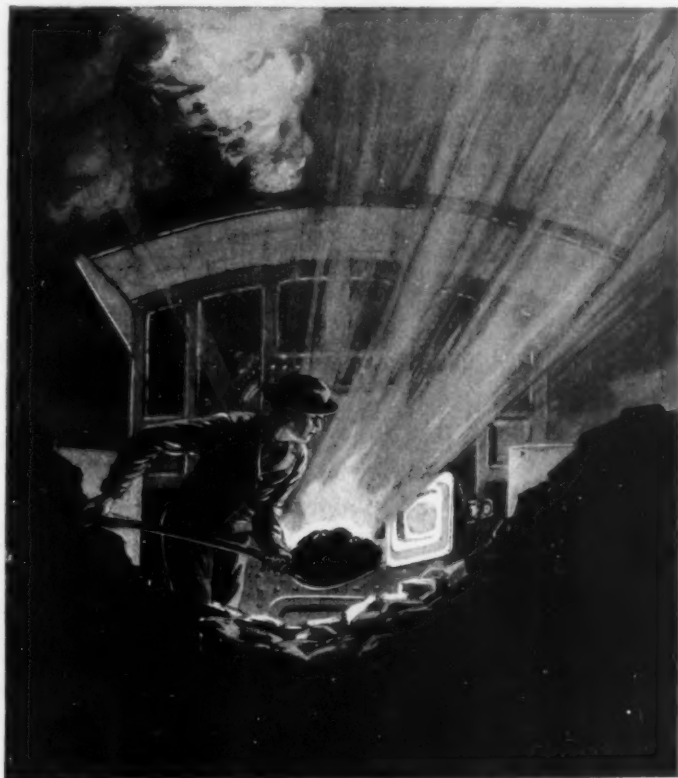
"Good-by, and heaven help you, Tom," replied Mr. Lenox.

Before going out, Tom took off his well-

worn overcoat and jacket, tightened up his belt, and prepared to run the race of his life. He then went out to the platform and found that the men had oiled the track thoroughly for several hundred yards. He did not dare tell them of his purpose for fear that they would stop him; but he said to Bob, "After the engine passes, get all the men you can at work,—more are coming every minute,—put on all the oil you can, and tallow, but be careful to see that there is nothing to make the cars jump the track, for that will kill all the cattle and horses, and perhaps poor Jack Flynn! He was seen clinging to the last car at Rockville. But he dared not climb up or jump off, it seems, on account of the speed of the train. There she comes now—I can hear her! I'll run up to the other end of the platform to meet her."

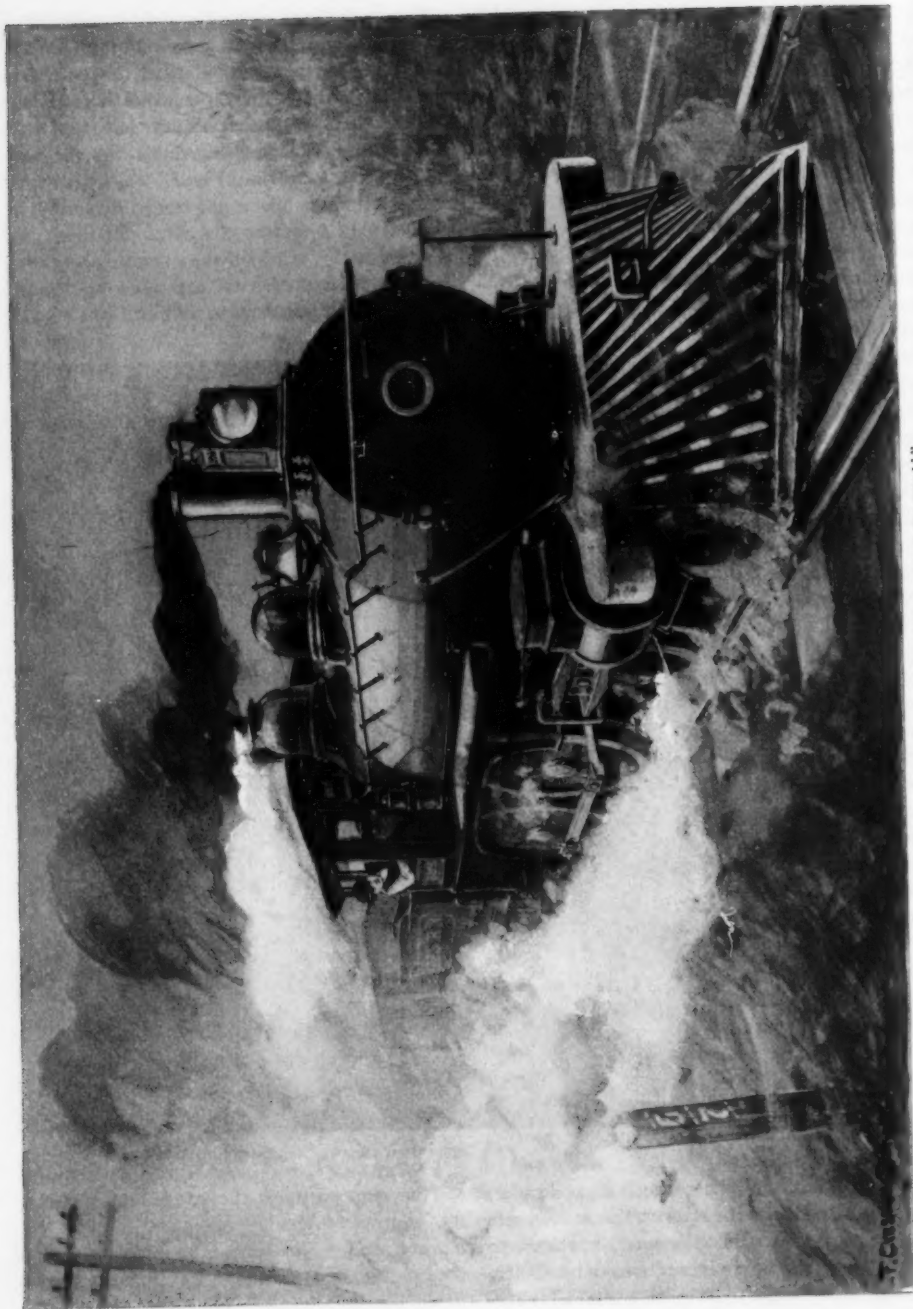
The engine could be heard thundering down the track long before she could be seen coming through the fog. Tom was at the far end of the depot where the men had first begun to apply the oil and grease; and, as they had worked back, he was in a position to get all the benefit of the loss of speed in consequence. The men flew back from the track. When the engine struck the oiled rails she trembled, and her wheels slipped rather than revolved along the track. The momentum was so great that at first the speed was scarcely affected; but as successive sections of track were passed, there began to be quite a marked reduction in speed. Tom noticed this with joy.

The engine was coming rapidly toward him. He turned and ran along the platform in the same direction as the engine, at a speed that would have carried him fifty yards in about six seconds. The engine gained on him, and, just as the step was passing, he reached up, grasped the handles, and swung himself up on the step. He rested there for a few seconds, and then climbed slowly up into the cab. His face was as white as the card on the steam-gauge, and, in spite of the cold wind that blew upon him, he was dripping with perspiration.



"HE OPENED WIDE THE FURNACE DOORS, AND THREW IN THE COAL."

Tom glanced up at the gauge, and saw that the supply of steam was being rapidly exhausted, and, to his horror, he understood that the engine was running by its own inertia down the steep grade. He closed the throttle, set the lever one notch on the reverse side, and



"IT'S A RACE FOR LIFE, AND I OUGHT TO WIN!"

T. C. C.

then tried the air-brake. It worked in a feeble way, but checked the engine a trifle. He found that in order to gain control of the engine he must get up more steam, and get the air-pump running.

Tom slowly crept along the flying engine over the tender, and was pleased to find that there was plenty of water in the tank. Being as strong a young fellow of fifteen years as one often sees, he had no trouble in getting up a brisk fire. He then went back to the engine, and was gratified to see the steam was rapidly coming up. There was no thought of fear in the brave boy, but he did not forget that he was "between two fires." He must keep his own engine from running into the passenger-train, and he must keep ahead and out of the way of the runaway section. Anxiously he peered out into the fog, but he could see nothing of the train he was pursuing, and could hear nothing of the train that was pursuing him. On sped the flying steed of steel, and still the pointer on the steam-gauge moved slowly upward. Twenty pounds more pressure, and he felt that he would have complete control of the engine. He was using but little steam now—only enough to try the air-pump now and then. In a few moments he moved back the lever another notch toward the reverse, and cautiously pulled out the throttle a little. The effect was good, and he knew that he was gaining control of the engine; but how she flew along over culvert, bridge, and trestle, like a thing of life on a wild holiday!

Out came the throttle a little farther, and back went the lever another notch. The engine was running slower. "By reversing her and putting on the 'emergency air,'" Tom said to himself, "I can now stop her in three or four lengths. It would be a bad thing to do, but I'll do it if I have to." He looked up at the clock. "In five minutes more No. 14 will have passed to the other track and the switch will be closed. I'll slow up a bit"; and so he did.

The engine promptly responded, and settled down to a forty-mile gait. Tom, with his head far out of the window, with one hand on the throttle and the other on the air-lever, tried to pierce the mist with those bright dark eyes, but in vain. Boom! and a torpedo exploded under

the wheels. "No. 14 has stopped—to switch!" said Tom. Boom! boom! Again came the warning torpedoes. "'Run slowly, with the engine under full control'; that's what those mean." Suddenly Tom's attention was called to a thundering sound from the rear.

"It's the broken section coming like a whirlwind. Now I'm in for it. If she will hold off for two minutes I'll be all right." Tom threw the lever full ahead, and opened the throttle; the engine seemed to leap forward. In a minute more he caught just a glimpse of the rear lights on the passenger-train, and knew that a minute later he would be upon her. Nearer came the thundering roar behind him, and he dared not look back. The light in front swerved to the left. Would the switch be closed in time for him to keep ahead of the pursuing section? was the question which flew through his brain. His engine was at the switch, and it had just been replaced! "Thank God for that!" was the brief prayer he murmured. "The passenger-train is safe, if my orders have been carried out. Now to save myself, and the cattle behind me. It's a race for life, and I ought to win!"

A tangent* of twelve miles lay straight before him, with a gently descending grade, then a mile level, and then a four-mile up-grade into Mount Vernon. Once more he crept down into the tender, opened wide the furnace doors, raked the fire, and threw in the coal evenly over every part of the great fire-box. He left the ash-pit door open for better draft, and then climbed upon the coal to see if he could distinguish his relentless pursuer. The light had begun to dispel the fog, and three hundred feet away he could see the on-coming train. "It will take all the speed she's got," he thought, and leaving the tender he crept back into the cab.

He opened the throttle wide, pushing the lever over forward as far as it would go. The steam kept up, and the only thing to fear was that the axle-boxes would get heated on account of the frightful speed of the engine; but then he reflected that the pace would tell on the freight-axes even more, since they were not geared to so high a speed as were those of the locomotive.

The engine was now going at the rate of a mile a minute, or faster. More coal was necessary, and he resolved to leave the window and stand by the furnace. In ten minutes the level was struck, and the pursuer had gained two hundred feet, on account of its greater weight; a minute later the up-grade was reached. More coal was needed, and the shovel was kept busy feeding the fiery mouth whose tongues of flame seemed never to be satisfied. As the engine began the ascent of the up-grade, the freight section was only fifty feet away. After a mile on the grade, the locomotive pulled slowly away from the freight. Then Tom closed the ash-pit door, went back to the window, closed the throttle a little, tried the air-brakes, and three minutes later pulled into the depot at Mount Vernon, and came to a stop. He looked out of the window, perched high in air, and said to the operator: "Just wire Wayville that engine 303 has arrived here safely, and that Tom's all right."

The crowd of people who were on the platform surrounding the general manager's special car looked with amazement on the young engineer seated in the cab of the smoking engine. The general manager himself was not pleased at the sight, nor at the "unaccountable delay caused by some drunken operator," as he thought, who had imagined that he was the president of the road. He had not yielded with the best grace to the order stopping his train, and would not have heeded it but for the information that the same person had ordered the east-bound passenger-train over to the west-bound track, and his order had been obeyed, thus blocking the way. This passenger-train might now pull in at any minute. The operator could not get any reply from Wayville, to find out about the order.

"Well, young man," said the manager, "what are you doing up in that engine? Don't you know it's against orders? Where are the engineer and fireman? It makes no difference—they are discharged. Get down out of there! Where did you steal the engine?"

Tom could say nothing, but he did not move.

"Be lively there," continued the manager in a rage. "Officer, arrest that boy for stealing the engine!"

"Grandpa, give him a chance to explain," said a young girl who stood near the angry official. "He does n't look as if he had stolen anything," she continued.

"I'll attend to him, Mary. He will have a chance to explain in court!"

"Please don't have him arrested," pleaded the young girl—and she seemed to be the only one who dared address her grandfather.

"My dear child, you don't understand these matters. Officer, get this fellow out of there. The engine looks as if it had been badly used."

The officer climbed up into the cab, and roughly shook Tom by the shoulder. Tom seemed dazed. What a fate, after all he had braved and done—to be received, instead of with thanks and praise, with threats of arrest and imprisonment!

"Come, get out of here—lively," said the officious policeman, anxious to show his authority before so high an official as the general manager of the U. S. R. R. Co. "You look to me like a pretty tough customer."

This roused Tom's ire.

"Don't touch me, please; I'll get down myself. I want to say just a word to Mr. Holmes." He walked up to that official and said, "I did not steal your engine, and—"

"I don't care to hear any talk," said the manager.

"I don't care to talk, either," said Tom, "but you'd better send the engine back to the grade, and see what's become of Jack Flynn. He was clinging to the rear car of a runaway section of train No. 33."

"What do you say?—the train broken in two? Where did it happen?" asked Mr. Holmes, all interest at once.

"At Cantwell; the train broke in two places, coming down the grade. The engine was struck by the flying center-section, hurling the engine crew off, and starting the engine the other way. I climbed on the runaway engine at Wayville, and brought her here. The rest of the train is back about two miles—unless she has run back down to the level."

"That's a pretty story. How did you pass No. 14?" asked the manager sternly, after thinking a moment.

"She was switched to the west-bound track at Lewistown," answered Tom.

"Tell the engineer and fireman on 39 to get up in this engine and run her back," said the manager to the conductor. "Officer, you bring the boy along, and I'll go with you. If his story is true, he can go; but if not, it will be all the harder for him."

The trainmen soon had the engine oiled up, finding it was none the worse for its fast run and that Tom had left everything in shipshape order. After backing down about two miles, a man was seen running up the track. As the engine came nearer, Tom cried out, "It's Jack Flynn—he's all right!"

Sure enough it was Flynn, but he was picked up more dead than alive. No one had ever taken or perhaps will ever take a ride like his. Briefly he told the story of the breaking of the train into three parts—an unheard-of thing, almost. He had been on the center section, alone; he had tried to apply the brakes, but the section he was on collided with the first section. He was thrown down on the top of a car, but had retained his senses enough to cling on. Then he had attempted to climb down on the last car, and drop off; but the speed had been so great that he knew the fall would be fatal, and so he had clung to the rear car, expecting death at any moment. But the train came to an up-grade, and speed had been so reduced that he managed to climb up and set two of the brakes, but then he had to stop. The train gained in speed as it passed the down-grade, and he was glad to climb back again to his old place at the rear of the last car. Next the brakes had parted, and it seemed as if he were rushing to swift destruction. At last, the up-grade being reached, the cars lost speed; he could then have stepped off, but he resolved to stay on until the train stopped, because it was his duty. Just before the cars started to run back to the level, he had dragged a tie across the track and held the section.

"You can 'lay off' until New Year's day," said Mr. Holmes, after Flynn had finished his story. The engine had by this time stopped in front of the section of the stock-train. The cars were coupled on, and a few minutes later the whole train pulled into the depot at Mount Vernon.

The officer by this time had concluded not to put the handcuffs on Tom.

"Officer, you can let that boy go," gruffly ordered Mr. Holmes. "Who are you?" he asked Tom.

"I am Thomas Martin's son," he answered; "he used to run the engine of your special—39."

"I thought I had seen you before. Go into my car and get warm. I see you have neither coat nor overcoat on, and this is a pretty cold day. Mary, get my overcoat and put it on that boy as soon as you can, and see that he gets a warm place; he is nearly frozen." Tom was a little abashed as he walked into the magnificent private car of the general manager, escorted by that official's granddaughter. But he was soon at ease, and warmly wrapped in a big ulster.

Mr. Holmes went into the telegraph office, and directed that the passenger-train held at Lewistown should be switched back to its own track and started on its way.

He asked the operator at Wayville who had sent from that office the messages stopping his train, and by whose orders. No one at Wayville was in the office when the despatches were sent, and no copy of the messages could be found. The operator had been greasing the track, and had supposed Tom was similarly employed, as on account of the fog he could not tell the men apart.

"That's very strange," muttered Mr. Holmes, as he entered his car and signaled the engineer to go ahead. He was an honest, high-principled man, quick in his methods—the first to see a wrong, the first to right it. He was stern in all his dealings with his men, but he was also just, and they all respected him. He came back to where Tom was seated and said: "Well, my young engineer, how are you coming on, and where do you want to get off?"

"I'm all right, and I want to get off at Wayville. The mail must be at the station, and I have to take it over to town."

"George," said Mr. Holmes to his son, who was the train-master of the road. "Do you happen to remember where the president is to-day?"

"I think he is in New York."

"Well, I wonder who sent these messages,"

said Mr. Holmes, handing them over to his son.

Tom flushed, but said nothing.

"They were sent from Wayville, by some man who must have had the running of the trains at his fingers' ends. A train-despatcher could have done no better. I don't know of any man at Wayville who could do it. Do you, Tom?" asked the train-master.

"Well, I don't think it was very much of a thing, only a fellow had to think pretty quick."

"Did *you* do it?" asked the general manager suddenly.

"Yes, sir, I did."

"You sent the messages?"

"Yes, sir."

"Are you — besides being a fireman and an engineer — a train-despatcher and operator?"

"And president for an hour," chimed in Mary.

"Yes, sir; I plead guilty to all. But I was only acting president," said Tom.

"How dared you do such a thing?" asked Mr. Holmes.

"I dared do anything that would save human life. If some one had not dared, what would have happened? There was but one thing to do, and I did the best I could."

"You are not working for the company?"

"No, sir."

"Would you like to be?"

"Yes, sir."

"George, you see that Tom Martin is put on the rolls at \$50.00 a month, as messenger in the general manager's office. His salary began on December first, and he reports for duty on January second."

"Thank you, sir," said Tom heartily.

When the train pulled in at Wayville, there was a large crowd at the depot; and Tom was greeted with cheers as he stepped from the private car. He immediately threw the mail-pouches into the hand-cart that was standing near, and, without saying a word, started to fulfil his duty. Duty was first with him.

The general manager and his guests got off the train, and, mingling with the crowd, soon learned all that Tom had done in saving the train. They also learned, as they had already

guessed, that he was brave, honest, and generous.

The story of his father's death and the struggle of Tom and his mother to save their little home, found many listeners.

In the depot, Mr. Lenox, the ticket-agent, was telling Mr. Holmes the whole story over again — of the money Tom had saved to buy a present for his mother, of his last request as he started for the flying engine. Tears stood in both men's eyes as the recital was finished.

"Saved hundreds of lives, and thousands of dollars, by his practical knowledge. A wide-awake boy — fearless and true; risked his own life — a thorough American boy. I like him," said the general manager to the agent, in his crisp, short way.

Then the special train pulled out of the depot, but Tom was not forgotten by its passengers, as the sequel will show.

Christmas day dawned bright and fair on all the world, yet there was a peculiar brightness and happiness around Tom Martin's home. Tom had purchased a rocking-chair for his mother with the money he had earned, and was contented with the past and hopeful for the future.

At ten o'clock "Doc" Wise, the express-messenger, delivered a large box at Widow Martin's home, and Tom, with all the curiosity of a wide-awake boy, soon had it open. There was a beautiful cloak from Mrs. Holmes for his mother; there was an overcoat and a suit of clothes for Tom, given by George Holmes. There was a gold watch from the general manager, bearing the inscription: "He risked his life for others. December 24, 1891." Then there was a check to pay off the mortgage, from Mr. Holmes and his guests. Last of all in a pretty frame was a little painting of the runaway engine, No. 303, on which Tom had taken his momentous ride. On the back of the picture was this inscription: "Be always brave and true, and you may indeed be president. Mary Holmes." Of all the presents, Tom liked this one best.

In the evening came the men from the depot, bearing various gifts. It was a fit crowning of a happy day for Tom, because of the knowledge that he had the affection and respect of the men and boys who had known him always.

HOW THE DOMINIE WENT TO SEA

BY VIRGINIA WOODWARD CLOUD.



'm going to see—" the Dominie said,
With a nod of his gray, sagacious
head
To a path that wound from the hill-
side down

Away to a far-off seaport town —

"To see —" and he nodded, and off he went,
His hands behind and his wise head bent,
And a far-seeing look in his kind blue eyes
Fixed on some marvelous enterprise.

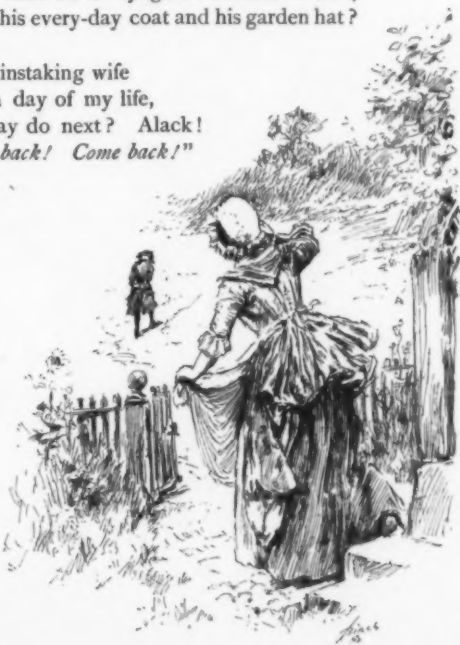
"To sea!" cried his wife from the trellised door.
"Was ever a man so queer before —
To start on a voyage as sudden as that,
In his every-day coat and his garden hat?

"Or ever a faithful, painstaking wife
As worried as I each day of my life,
To know what he may do next? Alack!
Dominie Brown, come back! Come back!"

But in vain she called, and in vain she ran;
The long-limbed Dominie, excellent man,
Was up the road that led to the hill,
Striding along with a right good will.

So the provident wife, who knew his ways,
Sped back, in a state of sore amaze,
For his three-cornered hat, and his long-tailed
coat,
And a silken scarf to envelop his throat,

And his flowered waistcoat, and breeches
blue,
And a ribbon black for the end of his queue,
And his silver buckles and gold-headed
stick,
And his slippers thin, and his gaiters thick,



And his powder-horn, and his musket new,
And lastly she added his field-glass too;
"Because," this provident wife quoth she,
"In foreign lands there is much to see!"



Then she sped through the village and over
the road,
While far in the distance the Dominie strode,
And to every one questioning thus cried she,
"The Dominie says he is going to sea!"

So straightway the Innkeeper after her ran,
And so did the Beadle and Penny-bun Man,
The Piper and Fiddler, still playing a jig,
And the Clerk with his pen and his gown
and his wig,



The Doctor, a-riding his old gray nag,
Came jogging along with his saddle-bag,
And the Miller, too, stopped his wheel and
he sped
With his dusty hat on his floury head;



While, after each one there hurried his wife,
All of them running as if for life,
Exclaiming, "If Dominie 's going to sea,
He has much of importance to say to *me!*"

So they went round the hill by the winding
road,
While out of their sight the Dominie strode,
For they said, "We will meet where the
path leads down,
And he takes the highway for yonder town!"

And to every one questioning thus cried they,
"*The Dominie 's going to sea, this day!*"
Till all with important excitement rife
Went hurrying after the Dominie's wife.

But though they scrambled and though they
ran —

To the path where the broad highway began,
There was not a sign of Dominie Brown
On the way which led to the seaport town!

They waited and wondered and shaded their
eyes

Till the sun lay low in the western skies;
Then every one said it was easy to see
That so notably wise a man as he,



Taking a voyage as sudden as strange
 To give his loftiest ideas range,
 Would choose his own road, and even now
 Was doubtless a-sail at some brave ship's
 prow!

So back as they came, with wonderment rife,
 They followed the Dominie's provident wife
 Bewailing a husband who traveled like that
 In his every-day coat and his garden hat!

Back where the Dominie's lands begun
 They bore her company every one,
 Condoling her care and her desolate state,
 Till they came in sight of her garden gate.

And there, serenely shading his eyes,
 With a questioning look of pleased surprise,
 Stood Dominie Brown for all to see.
 "Now welcome to you, kind friends!" quoth he.

"So fine a season it is for a stroll,
 I too have refreshed my body and soul,
 And have been to see"—he nodded his head
 To the hill round which they late had sped—

"To see if yon path, if I followed it straight,
Would bring me around to my garden gate.
And it did!" The Dominie nodded and
smiled,
While contentment shone in his blue eyes mild.

But nobody smiled and nobody stirred;
Only the Dominie's wife was heard,
Her eyes they flashed and she spake most
true —
"One never knows what such a man will do!"



A BOY OF THE FIRST EMPIRE.

BY ELBRIDGE S. BROOKS.

[*Begun in the November number.*]

CHAPTER III.

THE SCHOOL-BOY OF ST. CYR.

HE found out speedily. As they passed from the Street of the Washerwomen into the Street of the Night Patrol, and so on beside the ruins of the great castle, Philip thought they were taking him to the office of the chief of police in the splendid City Hall; but, passing the Square of the River Beach, upon which faced the statued front of the City Hall, the boy's conductors pushed ahead without stopping, cut across into the long Street of the Temple, and as before them loomed the four gray turrets and the great central tower, Philip knew his destination to be the gloomy old Temple itself—the death-chamber of knights and kings.

"Come, now, this is pleasant!" he said to himself, wondering why they should take him there. "What am I, then? He who picks a pocket or steals a ride is surely too small game for the Temple. It is there they take traitors and assassins. And, surely, I am neither."

So, wondering still, he passed through the frowning gateway of the Temple, and speedily stood within one of the "examination chambers," in which were gathered certain men, some in uniform and some in citizen's dress.

Then, indeed, did Philip give a start of surprise, and fathom the reason for his forced march; for among those gathered in the examination chamber he recognized at once "the three rascally ones" whom, in the wine-shop of Citizen Popon, he had heard conspiring against the Emperor.

The boy was confronted with the men, and swore to their identity without hesitation. He could never have forgotten them. His testimony was almost unnecessary; for, so cleverly had they, with the "man from England," been

entrapped upon the wharf of the Tower that the police had a clear case against them from the start. But Philip's evidence was the connecting link, and the would-be assassins of the Emperor came to speedy punishment. They simply "disappeared," so the record says; but that means a swift and secret punishment. And that is all we hear of the conspiracy of Louis Loizeau, "the man from England," whose plotting this boy of ten so cleverly brought to naught.

And, his evidence given, the boy of ten came quickly into his reward. Under the guidance of an officer from the central police, he visited the shops in the straggling arcades of the old Temple market, and came out a new boy—clean, clothed, and almost a stranger to himself, fit to call on the king.

Such a call was, evidently, next on the program; for soon a cab was whirling him, with many a twist and turn, through broad boulevard and narrow street, and so across the Seine into the open country and the smiling park of St. Cloud.

This time he did not loiter under the great chestnut-trees, nor was he handed over to the clerk of the kitchen, nor left in the "scullion's quarters." Straight to the noble palace he was driven, and then, under the guidance of Constant, the Emperor's body-servant, he was led to the private apartments in the great palace of St. Cloud. And there, once more, he saw the Emperor.

Before a closed door the valet stopped and rapped. Then he flung it open and announced: "The boy from Paris, Sir."

Not in royal robes, nor yet in the glittering uniform of the chief soldier of France, did the boy from Paris, find the Emperor. He simply saw "Uncle Bibiche" once more! For there, pacing up and down the room, head bent and hands clasped behind his back, as if in thought, walked the short, stout man in a simple uni-

form. And strutting after him, almost on his heels, came the little four-year-old antelope-rider, with the Emperor's famous little chapeau covering his curly head, and the Emperor's terrible "sword of Marengo" trailing on the floor behind him.

The "boy from Paris" entered the room. The Emperor looked up and, with a smile of surprise at the boy's altered appearance, exclaimed: "But not our dirty boy, little one! Our prince of the *sans-culottes* looks as fine as a fiddler, does he not? How is it, son of the *émigré*? Is the mud prince on the road to being a gold prince?"

Even Philip's uncomfortableness in his new clothes—an uncomfortableness that was almost an imprisonment after the liberty of rags, and that made him feel, as he expressed it, "all hands and feet"—could not keep back the laugh that sprang from his quick sense of the ridiculous, at sight of Uncle Bibiche and the little caricature at his heels, bearing the famous hat and sword. But he collected himself speedily, and replied to the imperial "funning."

"I am come, Sire," he said, "because they sent me here. I thank you for my fine clothes."

"As I thank you for your open ears, mud prince," responded the Emperor, giving to the boy's ear the pinch that was always the sign of Napoleon's good humor. "They may have saved my life, these ears; though you will live to learn that it is one thing to plot and another to do. And what now—would you still wish to go for a soldier?"

"If the Emperor will," the boy replied.

"So, that is what you told Babette. And how is Babette?" the Emperor asked.

"Weeping sorely, Sire, because the policeman carried me off, just when I had knocked down that pig of a Pierre for calling me a pick-pocket."

"Ah, then you left the Street of the Washerwomen in disgrace, you boy? So! Then shall you go back there in glory. But not to stay there. Son of the *émigré* Desnouettes, I will make you a soldier of France."

Overjoyed at this sudden coming true of his fondest dream, Philip fairly flung himself at the feet of the Emperor in a transport of joy, whereupon little Prince Napoleon, thinking the boy

from Paris was there for his pleasure, danced about and said:

"Sing 'Zig-zag' again, Dirty Boy. Sing 'Zig-zag' again."

Philip struggled to his feet. "Shall I, Sire?" and Napoleon nodded assent.

Then around and around the room the boy and the baby capered, for thus could Philip best work off his excess of rapture. And, as they capered, they sang again the chorus:

"Zig-zag; rig-a-doon,
Dance away to the drumstick's tune!"

Suddenly Philip stopped.

"And Babette, Sire?" he inquired.

"Well—what of Babette?" said the Emperor. "She may not go as a soldier."

"No, Sire. But I can look after her no more if I march away, and Mother Thérèse is a wicked one. And the Street of the Washerwomen is not for such as Babette. And the Emperor can do all things."

"Not all things. But this he can do. He can send you to school, and then make you a soldier. He can send Babette to school, and then make her a lady—or one fit to be a lady. She must not disgrace the prince, her champion. She, too, shall go to school."

Again Philip could not restrain himself; and, in excess of joy, hugged his friend, the little prince, who still clung to his hand.

"And—am I to go now, Sire?" he asked, after a moment.

"It is never too early to begin the making of a soldier of France," the Emperor said. Then he clapped his hands, and Constant entered quickly.

"Constant," the Emperor said, "find Monsieur Meneval. Bid him meet me in my cabinet."

Then the Emperor left the two boys alone, and Philip told the little prince stories of Babette and the boys of the washerwomen's quarter, while the little prince recited for Philip one of La Fontaine's fables, many of which the bright little fellow knew by heart.

But before he had gone through "King Log," Constant appeared again, and Philip was taken to the Emperor. With him was an officer of the household.



"THE EMPEROR'S FAMOUS CHAPEAU COVERING HIS CURLY HEAD, AND THE EMPEROR'S 'SWORD OF MARENGO' TRAILING ON THE FLOOR BEHIND HIM."

"Go with Monsieur my secretary, young Desnouettes. He will conduct you to the Street of the Washerwomen, and change disgrace to honor. He will see to Babette. He will place you in the military school of Fontainebleau, now transferred to St. Cyr. There shall you learn a soldier's first duty—obedience; a soldier's single watchword—loyalty. Be studious, be attentive, be obedient, be loyal, be honorable, son of the *émigré* Desnouettes, and your future may be a brilliant one. I shall hear of you. Farewell."

He motioned the lad out, but ere the boy turned to go, he stammered out words full of joy and thankfulness. "Sire," he said, "you shall hear of me. I will be true, and—thank you for Babette."

Then he followed Monsieur the secretary, and was soon speeding away with him in one of the household carriages, on the panel of which was emblazoned the imperial N.

Straight to the dirty Street of the Washerwomen the carriage sped. And what a time there was in that dark and narrow quarter of the old

city when the carriage drew up before the little coped fountain where "that pig of a Pierre" had shaken the fist of derision and contempt!

And when from the carriage stepped the boy in his new suit, with Monsieur, the Emperor's secretary, and Monsieur, the deputy mayor of the section (the alderman of the ward, as one might say), following after, then how the people stared!

And when Monsieur the deputy mayor in a loud voice announced that for gallant action and for loyal deed his imperial majesty the Emperor took into his service Philip the son of the emigrant Desnouettes, how the people cheered; and Mother Thérèse, that foxy old tyrant, "blessed the boy," and did not see how she could spare him, and took the purse of money the Emperor sent her, while "that pig of a Pierre over the way" turned so green with envy that Philip really felt sorry for him.

And how little Babette laughed and cried in the same breath when Philip told her the Emperor had heard about her and meant to make a lady of her!

So it was soon over, for all the world like some wonderful fairy tale, and Philip Desnouettes, son of the *émigré*, bound boy of the washerwomen's quarter, protégé of the Emperor, turned his back upon the narrow and dirty street he had once called his home, and, riding away from the past, was entered as a pupil in the military school of St. Cyr.

From the day when, as a new boy, he was introduced into the new school of St. Cyr, and was gradually transformed from an uncouth street-boy to a little machine, to the day when, four years later, he left it for other scenes, Philip Desnouettes's life was one of continuous training. He got up by the drum, he ate his meals by the drum, he went to bed by the drum. He learned to drill, to ride, and to build fortifications; he received instruction in languages, literature, history, and mathematics; he toughened without fires, developed by austere discipline, lived by rule, played pranks and took his punishment as he did his medicine—without grumbling, grew, strengthened, broadened in mind and body, learned to be a French school-boy, a French soldier, a French gentleman.

Then came 1810. Great things had been happening while Philip was a school-boy at St. Cyr. The map of Europe had been changed again and again, and Napoleon was the map-maker. There had been wars and rumors of war; there had been mighty marches, bloody battles, terrible triumphs; and with march and battle and triumph the fame of Napoleon, Emperor of the French, had grown to mighty proportions.

In 1810 France and Napoleon were the greatest names in all the world. And Philip had met Corporal Peyrolles.

Peyrolles, the wooden-legged, had left his

good leg of flesh on the bloody field of Austerlitz, and, pensioned by the Emperor, had been made one of the drill-sergeants in St. Cyr school.

To Peyrolles the Emperor was not a man, he was "the Emperor"; and Peyrolles worshiped him even as did the Romans of old worship their highest and bravest—as something more than mortal. And yet the boys at St. Cyr declared that but for Peyrolles the Emperor would never have been; for it was Peyrolles's delight to recount for the boys of St. Cyr how "I and the Emperor" conquered the world!



CADET DESNOUETTES AND CORPORAL PEYROLLES.—"BE A SOLDIER OF FRANCE!"

But it was largely by Peyrolles's friendly promptings, *plus* the instruction of the St. Cyr school, that Philip became proficient in drill and ambitious of glory. And when, even be-

fore the allotted term of training, the summons came to "the cadet Desnouettes" to attend upon the Emperor, the boy felt that both fame and glory lay well within his grasp.

But Peyrolles said, "See what it is to have Corporal Peyrolles for your friend, cadet. Do you think it is because your sharp ears served the Emperor, when you were but a boy of the streets, that he now calls you to his side, even before your military schooling is done? Not so. It is because of me. It is because Peyrolles has had you in hand. The Emperor has heard of it. He bids you come to him that you may show others in his service what it is to be tutored in arms by the man who helped the Emperor to win the day at Arcola and Lodi, at Castiglione and the Pyramids, at Marengo and Ulm and Austerlitz. Long live the Emperor, and long live Peyrolles, his right hand! Do not disgrace my teaching. You are but an infant yet, cadet. But so were we all once, and even a child can be brave. Listen, you cadet: rush not rashly into danger, but, once in, do not back out. Strike not until you can strike swift and sure. Obey, and you shall be obeyed; follow, and you shall be followed; seek glory, and glory shall seek you. Be a soldier of France, and France shall be proud of her soldier, and shall say to the world: 'Behold, this cadet was a pupil of Peyrolles of St. Cyr, grenadier and helper of the Emperor!'"

So Philip left St. Cyr and reported at the Tuileries, that noble old palace in the city, whose story is interwoven with that of France's ups and downs through fully three hundred years.

And in Napoleon's private study, beyond the Diana Gallery and next to the Blue Room, Philip once more saluted the Emperor.

"So, it is young Desnouettes, the boy with the good ears," was the Emperor's greeting. "Have both eyes and ears served you well at St. Cyr, you cadet? You look a little soldier already. Are you prepared to march and to fight?"

"Yes, Sire—for the Emperor," the boy replied shrewdly.

"Good"; and Napoleon pulled the cadet's hair good-humoredly. "But these are no longer days of blood. The empire is at peace.

I have sent for you to serve here at court. Take your orders from the Baron de Meneval. From this day you are a page of the palace."

CHAPTER IV.

THE BALL AT THE EMBASSY.

It was a new life into which this imperial appointment plunged the active boy of fourteen. It was discipline, and yet it was delightful; it was slavery, and yet it was splendor; there was labor to tire both feet and brain; there were long hours of monotony, but many opportunities for pranks and frolics. It was run here and run there; it was do this and do that; it was not soldiering, and yet it had its conflicts; it was not a call for courage, and yet it was duty joined to temptation and tried by opportunity. The life of a page of the palace was not all play, though passed in the midst of splendor; nor was it all dignity, though spent in a constant round of fête and ceremonial.

And into fête and ceremonial young Philip Desnouettes was speedily introduced. It was the year 1810. In that year Napoleon the Emperor married the Archduchess of Austria. The son of a poor Corsican lawyer wedded the daughter of the Austrian Cæsars. It was a year of brilliancy, of excitement, of restless rounds of display and constant repetitions of marvelous entertainments.

Never was a boy of fourteen surrounded by more of glitter, or permitted to be a part of more royal "goings on." All this might ruin a boy of weak nature; but Philip was blessed with a cool head, a well-balanced mind, and much common sense. He had "cut his wisdom-teeth" as a street-boy of Paris; he had learned discipline in the school of St. Cyr; and so, though often sorely tried and many a time in scrapes and in disgrace, he was too manly a fellow to "lose his head," and so he was really developed as well by the temptations as by the duties that filled his daily life in those most brilliant surroundings—the court of the First Empire.

As page of the palace, he was on duty both at the splendid Tuileries and at beautiful St. Cloud. And through the month of March there was enough going on in both these great

palaces to tire any ordinary boy, and keep his head a-whirl with bewilderment. For then it was that Paris and the palaces were making ready for the reception of the new mistress of France, the girl Empress, Marie Louise of Austria.

Philip could not understand it all. Austria had been "a red rag" to every French boy since the days of Marie Antoinette. And, at St. Cyr, Philip had been brought up to hate the Austrians, with whom the Emperor was so often at war, and whom three times he had faced and conquered.

"I would like to know what Peyrolles thinks of this," he often said to himself. "The Emperor marry an Austrian? Well, for one, I can't see through it!"

But what of that? No boy of fourteen gives much thought to political right or wrong, or to the policy of kings and cabinets. Only the events that bring him opportunity, or the doings that mean excitement and fun, arouse in him anticipation and desire.

He ran here and he ran there; he fetched and he carried; he rehearsed for ceremonies and waited for orders at palace doors; he "bossed things" whenever he had a little brief authority; he did the thousand and one "chores" that are a part of the duties of a royal page, who is above servants in station and below officials in rank. The Grand Marshal of the Palace, the Chief Secretary to the Emperor, the First Gentleman in Waiting, the First Page of the Palace, and, first of all, the Emperor himself—these were the boy's masters, and, as became a royal page, he ignored all others, and gave himself airs whenever he was beyond the beck and call of his acknowledged superiors.

Fête crowned fête, and ceremony ceremony. By stately stages, from Vienna on to Paris, the Austrian princess came to her throne, escorted by Peers of France, and surrounded by all the pomp and power of this theatrical First Empire. Then Napoleon met her; and on a bright April day she entered Paris in a blaze of glory.

And Philip entered, too, so spick and span in a new and gorgeous livery that he felt certain all eyes must be looking at him quite as

much as at any one who had a place in that long and glittering procession escorting Napoleon and Louise from St. Cloud to the Tuileries.

And where do you think the boy was? Clinging with five other pages, for all the world as if they were "cutting behind," to the foot-board of the magnificent coronation coach of glass and gold in which sat the Emperor and Empress. For there, according to the etiquette that governed the imperial "show," was the place for the pages, while as many more hung on to the driver's seat; and I really believe the boys and girls of Paris thought it almost as fine to be one of those clinging pages as to be the Emperor in his cloak of red and white velvet, or the Empress by his side, glittering in her golden dress and her circlet of diamonds. I am sure Babette thought so, when she spied Philip. For Babette was one of the throng of little girls, dressed in white, who at the Arch of Triumph showered the coronation coach with flowers, and sang a welcome to the new Empress.

So, under great arches and along the crowded streets, which were gorgeously decorated and lined with tiers of seats built for the people, with the imperial cavalry in advance, with lancers and chasseurs and dragoons marching in splendid array, with bands playing their best, with heralds-at-arms in brilliant costumes, and with eight prancing horses drawing the coronation coach topped with its golden dome, its four spread eagles, and its imperial crown, Philip and the Emperor brought the girl Empress into Paris.

The bells rang merrily, the artillery thundered salutes, the picked soldiers of the Grand Army in double files along the route presented arms, the young girls strewed the way with flowers, the great marshals of France and the colonels of the Imperial Guard, mounted on their splendid horses, surrounded the glittering coach. Thus, up the shouting Champs Elysées,—real Fields of Paradise that day,—and under the great arch into the Tuileries gardens, this splendid procession moved to where, in the magnificent Square Room of the palace of the Tuileries, Napoleon and Louise, surrounded by kings and queens, by lords and ladies, by car-

dinals and priests, and in the presence of eight thousand invited guests, were married by the Cardinal Fesch, Grand Almoner of France.

It was a regal display, one of the few really gorgeous ceremonials of history. Not the least interested spectator was young Philip Desnouettes, as, with the throng of royal pages, he crowded upon the steps that led to the great platform on which the marriage ceremony took place. Then followed the promenade in the picture-gallery, the reception in the splendid Hall of the Marshals, the imperial banquet in the theater, the public concert in the vast amphitheater built in the Tuileries gardens, the fireworks all along the Champs Elysées, the illumination of the Tuileries and of the great avenues and bridges and buildings of the city, which blazed with light until, as Philip declared, "all Paris seemed on fire."

He missed a part of the show, however, because he had a special duty to perform. He had to keep a dog from barking.

Into a room of the Tuileries he had been introduced by young Master Malvirade, the very important First Page to the Emperor, and had been ordered to wait there until relieved.

"There's a dog in here," the First Page had told him, "and a parrot. See to it, young Desnouettes, that the dog does not bark, nor the parrot squawk."

Here was a nice job for a boy who wished to see the fireworks! Philip was almost tempted to rebel; but he had been trained to obey, and he said not a word.

The room was at the end of a long corridor that was narrow and dimly lighted, but in the room itself there was a blaze of light from many lamps and candles. Philip had never seen this room before, and looked at it critically. It was clearly not a state apartment; it was more homelike than handsome. There were drawings and paintings on the walls, the furniture was not new, and certainly not Paris-made. Here hung some tapestry-work; there, birds in cages. On a gilded perch a great green parrot was clawing and shifting, cocking one bright eye down at a little dog crouched on a rug below him. It was this dog and this parrot that Philip was to keep quiet.

He waited some time. The cheers of the

crowd in the garden and the sounds of the great chorus at the open-air concert came, muffled, to his ears. The parrot was uneasy; the dog was restless; so, too, was Philip, and he grumbled inwardly at his imprisonment; but, all the same, he did his duty, petted the dog, and soothed "poor Polly" with promises of a make-believe cracker.

At last he heard steps coming along the corridor. The parrot cocked its head to listen; the dog started up and tried to "woof," but Philip's hand smothered the incipient bark.

The door opened, and a lady entered. She was young,—scarcely more than a girl,—but she was splendidly dressed, and her face was pretty and pleasant.

She stopped, blinded at first by the flood of light after the dimness of the corridor. Then she looked about her, started suddenly, and as the dog, with a bark and a struggle, broke away from Philip and sprang toward her, she dropped on her knees, regardless of her splendid dress, and fondled the dog with a cry of joy.

"Why, it is my room!" she cried, looking about in bewilderment,— "my own room at Vienna! The very same carpet, the very same chairs, my sister Clementine's drawings, my mother's tapestry, my uncle Charles's paintings, my books, my birds—Polly—and you—you dear, dear Fritzkin!" here she hugged the little dog again. Then she sprang to her feet and, saying impulsively, "Oh, Sire, how kind you are!" flung her arms about the neck of the gentleman who had followed her into the room,—a short, stout, middle-aged gentleman, with a splendid court costume, and a handsome face that sparkled with pleasure at the success of his little plot. It was Napoleon, and this was his surprise to his girl wife. He had reproduced in the Tuileries the room she had tearfully said good-by to in her father's palace at Vienna; he had remembered everything—even to the dog and the parrot that were her especial pets.

It was such a successful surprise that fun-loving Philip could not keep back the smile of sympathy.

"So, it is you, young Desnouettes; you are the genie in charge, eh?" the Emperor said. "Louise, this page once saved my life from

plotters; and now, behold! he is in a plot against the Empress. There's gratitude for you!"

The girl Empress cast a bright, quick look of pleasure at the kneeling boy, and held out to him a hand which Philip loyally kissed, swearing fealty to her in his chivalrous young heart.

that Philip really grew weary of magnificence. Finally, on the first day of July came the conclusion of this series of grand entertainments in honor of the Emperor and Empress—the ball at the Austrian Embassy.

In his fine old mansion on the Street of Provençe, sometimes known as Hospital Road, and sometimes known as the Street of the Crooked Stocking, the Austrian ambassador, Prince Schwarzenberg, gave a great ball. The house was not large enough for the entertainment he wished to give, so in his garden he built, "for one night only," a great wooden ball-room.

It was so splendidly decorated and furnished that it looked like a fairy palace. Its walls were covered with gold and silver brocade, draperies of spangled gauze were festooned all about it, fastened with flowers and glittering ornaments, while lights from chandeliers and candelabra made the great ball-room as brilliant as day.

The guests entered this splendid "palace for a night" through a long gallery that con-



"THE EMPRESS HELD OUT A HAND WHICH PHILIP LOYALLY KISSED."

And the Empress never forgot him, amid all the strange faces and crowding scenes of her new life as a sovereign.

Through the spring and into the summer these faces and scenes thronged, one upon the other, in quick succession. In April the Emperor and Empress, on their wedding journey, made "a progress" through northern France; during May and June festivity followed festivity in Paris, so closely and with such grandeur

connected it with the mansion. Musicians played in the Court of Honor; grottoes and arbors and temples were scattered all about the garden; on the lawn brilliantly costumed dancers took part in a delightful spectacle, and in the ball-room itself nearly two thousand people began to dance at midnight.

Philip was there, too—semi-officially on duty as a royal page, but also in for a good time as a guest of the ambassador.

He was having such a good time! There were plenty of young people there; and though, of course, the pages could hardly be expected to dance in the great ball-room, the boys found partners somehow, as boys are wont to do when such a fine chance for a dance occurs. To the same music that guided the grand quadrille in the ball-room, the boys and girls started an impromptu quadrille on the lawn, and had, no doubt, a much better time than the great folks at the stately function inside.

Philip found himself dancing with a pretty girl of about his own age, whose name he failed to catch in the hurried introduction that made her his partner; but they enjoyed their dance quite as much as if they had always known each other. And, when the first quadrille was over, the boys and girls crowded into the big ball-room to see the Emperor make his progress through the room, and to watch the young Empress on the imperial platform as she talked with two queens and a king or two.

In the Court of Honor the trumpets sounded a flourish; in the Temple of Glory a song of triumph was being sung; everything was brightness and beauty and gaiety and brilliancy, when, suddenly, Philip saw several gentlemen dash into the throng; then he heard a shout of warning, a note of terror; then came another

rush, and above the flourish of the trumpets and the voices of the singers rang out the cry: "Fire, fire!—the ball-room is on fire!"

It was no false alarm. The draperies caught quickly; the hangings burst into a blaze; there was a mad race for the one doorway that led into the house, and everywhere were confusion, terror, and a desperate dash for life.

Philip caught by the arm the young girl with whom he had been dancing on the lawn.

"Quick, give me your hand, mademoiselle!" he cried; "trust me and I will save you. The garden is our best chance."

But the girl seemed dazed. "My father!—where is my father?" she cried. "Oh, find my father!"

Philip was as wiry as he was plucky and sturdy, but an excited crowd in a blazing ball-room knows neither courage nor courtesy where all are struggling to escape.

Even as he lost his hold of the girl's arm when she sought to dart off in another direction, the splendidly dressed mob surged in between, and, separating the two, flung the boy to the floor, where he lay, trampled upon and kicked about in this mad rush for safety.

And, as he fell, he heard above the uproar the terrible danger-call: "A plot, a plot! Frenchmen, defend your Emperor!"

(To be continued.)

SNOW SONG.

OVER valley, over hill,
Hark, the shepherd piping shrill!
Driving all the white flocks forth
From the far folds of the North.

Blow, Wind, blow;
Weird melodies you play,
Following your flocks that go
Across the world to-day.

How they hurry, how they crowd
When they hear the music loud!
Grove and lane and meadow full
Sparkle with their shining wool.

Blow, Wind, blow
Until the forests ring:
Teach the eaves the tunes you know,
And make the chimney sing!

Hither, thither, up and down
Every highway of the town,
Huddling close, the white flocks all
Gather at the shepherd's call.

Blow, Wind, blow
Upon your pipes of joy;
All your sheep the flakes of snow
And you their shepherd boy!

Frank Dempster Sherman.

BLACK DOUGLAS.

(A Ballad.)

BY ANNA ROBESON BROWN.



COME hither, Rob and
Alison,
And leave your
noisy plays.
There is an hour or
so till tea,
A border tale I'll tell
to ye,—
So draw your chairs
up cozily

Around the cheerful blaze!

Black Douglas rode through Cumberland,
And sacked the border-side!
A hundred spearmen, bold and bright,
A hundred bowmen, fierce in fight,

A hundred men-at-arms that night,
Did with Black Douglas ride!

And straight for Ashley Towers they went.
Lord Ashley, Douglas' foe,
With gallant train had fared that morn
To chase the deer with hound and horn,
And knew not of his trampled corn
And waving fields laid low.

But when Lord Ashley reined at dusk
His horse upon the hill,
'T was not his tired steed he spared,
Nor for his ruined grain-fields cared,
When in his ears the noises blared
Of weeping, loud and shrill.



He galloped madly to
the gate,
And then threw
down his rein;
For Ralph, his hench-
man, weeping wild,
Cried out, "My lord,
the child! the
child!—
The lady Maud, by
force beguiled,
Is by yon robber
ta'en!

"We held the postern
steadily,
And thought to rout
the foe;
But as we strove the
little maid
Too far from out the
shelter stray'd,
And, swift, Black Doug-
las had her laid
Across his saddle-
bow!"



Oh, white grew brave Lord Ashley then,
 While ordering his array.
 Awhile he with his dagger play'd,
 And in his clenched teeth he said,
 "If he hath harmed my little maid,
 Douglas shall rue the day!"

But when to Douglas' hold they came,
 They raised a mighty shout,
 And then stood still in sheer amaze:
 Unguarded were the castle ways!
 And on the battlements at gaze
 No bowmen stood about!

But door and wall and castle, all
 Were empty of the foe,
 Portcullis up, and drawbridge down!
 So, wondering much, with many a frown,
 Through gates as peaceful as the town,
 Lord Ashley's henchmen go!

No sound they heard of man or beast
 Till to the hall they came,
 Then, sudden, stayed their hurrying feet;
 For to their ears, full tender, fleet,
 A peal of childish laughter sweet,
 As at some merry game!



From all the harried country-side
 Poured men to join the force;
 And soon six hundred bows of yew,
 A hundred steel-clad knights so true,
 Of stalwart pikemen not a few,
 Had filed along the course.

"St. Andrew!" cried Lord Ashley then.
 "Am I awake, or mad?
 Stay here, my men, for I will see
 What sort of witchcraft this may be
 That rings a laugh so cheerily
 To make Lord Douglas glad!"



But when he stood within the hall,
 He thought his wits astray:
 It was as full as it could hold
 Of Douglas' henchmen, who behold
 A little child with curls of gold
 A-toss in merry play,

While sounds her laughter sweet and shrill,
 And fearless as the breeze,
 As thus she tries a bolder course,
 And holds with all her baby force
 To the Black Douglas, as her horse,
 Down on his hands and knees!

But when her father she beheld,
 Straight to his arms she flew.
 "Give Maud a kiss, Papa!" she said;
 Then, as he kissed her curly head,
 All quickly spoke the little maid,
 "Now kiss Lord Douglas, too!"

Oh, then the laughter loud did ring
 Along that vaulted hall!
 I wot they laughed until they cried;
 Even Lord Douglas held his side,
 And brave Lord Ashley, all untried,
 His sword let clattering fall.

Out spake the fierce Black Douglas then:
 "Lord Ashley, by my hand,
 Your lady Maud has sealed a peace
 Between us two that should not cease,
 But will with love and time increase
 Our fortunes and our land!"

"A Douglas cannot stoop to sue,
 And yet, to make this good,
 If you to peace agree to-day,
 For all the loss of this foray
 A hundred head of kine I'll pay—
 I swear it, by the Rood!"

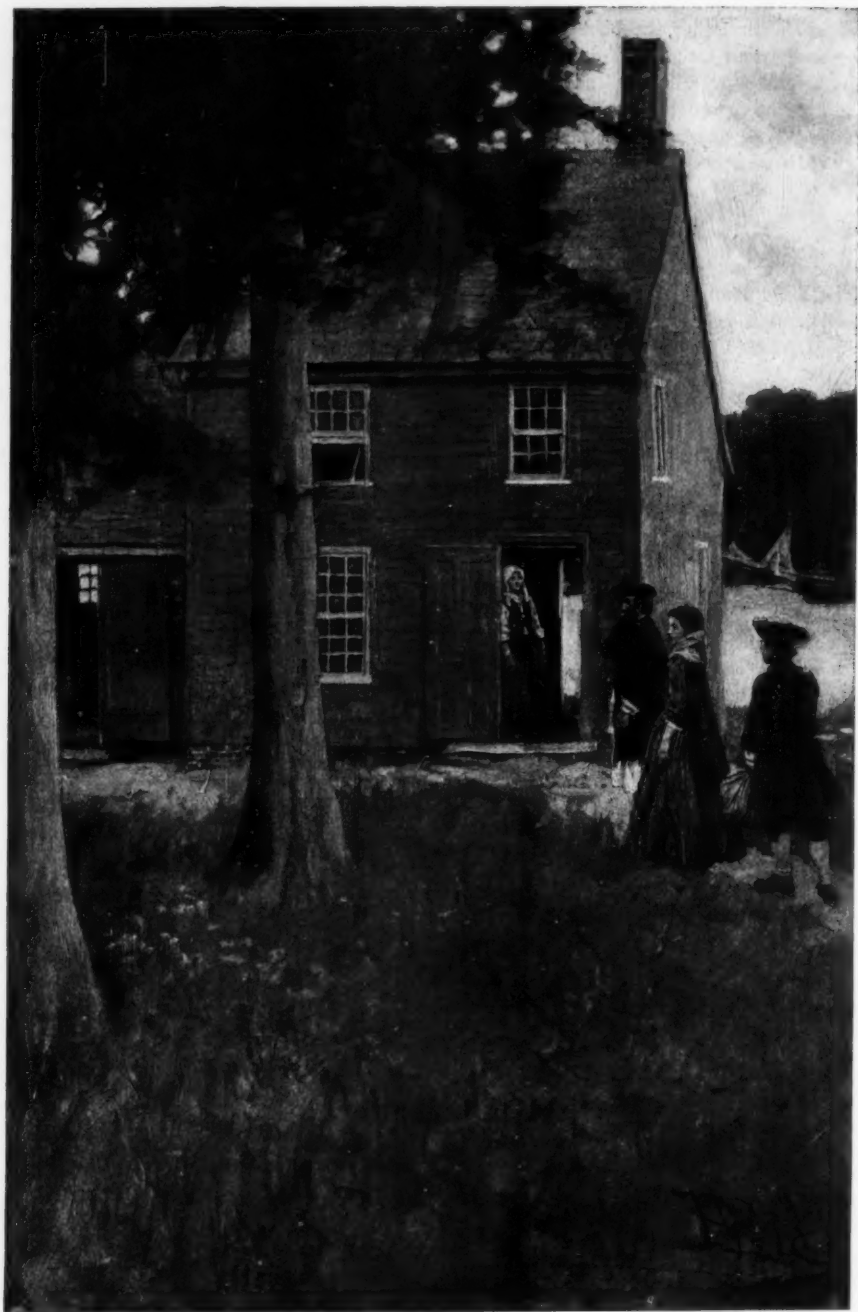
"Lord Douglas, since your wish is plain,
 Peace be it!" quoth the Earl.
 Their mailèd hands together rang,
 While all their followers shout, and clang
 Spear-heads and shields; and laughed and sang
 For joy the little girl.

"And now, Lord Ashley, by your grace,"
 Lord Douglas did aver,
 "Stay here to-night and take your rest;
 You and the maid shall share my best.
 Howbeit she grant," he said in jest,
 "I take one kiss of her!"

Thus did these two lords end their feud,
 Thenceforth in peace to bide.
 In friendship long they reaped and sowed;
 And when again war's beacon glowed,
 Lord Ashley and Lord Douglas rode
 To battle, side by side!

*Nay, no more tales, my Alison!
 Jump down from off my knee.
 The fire is dull and all burnt out;
 Poor Robbie is asleep, no doubt;
 And, children, do not jump about
 When Jane brings in the tea!*





"JACK FOLLOWED THE CAPTAIN AND THE YOUNG LADY UP THE CROOKED PATH TO THE HOUSE."

JACK BALLISTER'S FORTUNES.

BY HOWARD PYLE.

[*Began in the April number.*]

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE PIRATES' LAIR.

It took nearly a week to run from Norfolk to Bath Town. It was in the early daylight that the sloop came about and, with a short tack, sailed into the mouth of Bath Creek. On one side a swamp fringed with giant cypress-trees, their bright green foliage standing out against the darker green behind, came close down to the point. Upon the other side were open clearings and plantations. About half a league up, at the end of the mouth of the creek, the houses of the little town clustered among the trees upon a gentle rise of open ground. A long, straggling foot-bridge stretched out across the water, from the town to the further shore. The sloop was sailing smoothly nearer and nearer to the bluff shore upon which stood a square frame-house with a tall sloping roof and two lean chimneys. The house was almost hidden by the shade of two great cypress-trees that grew up from what seemed to be a little marshy hollow. A glimpse of a clearing showed, stretching out to the edge of the woods beyond. A half-dozen or more boats were drawn up on the beach, and a sloop, perhaps a little larger than that in which the pirates sailed, rode at anchor near a little landing-wharf. Two rough-looking white men and some half-dozen negroes stood on the landing, looking at the sloop as it sailed toward them. Jack was so interested in everything that he scarcely noticed the bustle and movement around him—the preparations for quitting the sloop; the shouts and calls. The boat-swain's whistle sounded shrilly, and in answer the anchor fell with a splash, and the sloop drifted slowly around to the wind, the mainsail flapping and beating heavily in the light air. Dred's head appeared above the cabin compan-

ionway. "Ballister!—Jack Ballister! Where's Jack Ballister?" he called.

"Here I be," said Jack, hurrying toward him.

"Come here," said Dred, and Jack followed him down into the cabin.

The Captain was combing out his shaggy hair, and the young lady sat with her arms leaning upon the table. She wore an air as of dumb expectation. "Here, boy," said the Captain, "you're to go ashore with me and the young lady. I want you to carry that bag of clothes up to the house. You're to wait upon the young lady, and be handy whenever my wife wants you, d'ye understand?"

"Yes, sir," answered Jack.

Just then Hands came to the companion-way. He stooped and looked down. "The boat's ready now, Captain," said he.

"Come, Mistress," said Captain Blackbeard; "if you're ready now, we'll go ashore."

The young lady rose instantly from her place and stood, resting her hand upon the table, and looking about her. "D'ye want any help?" said the pirate. She shook her head. "Well, come along, then." The Captain and Morton and Dred led the way to the deck; Miss Eleanor Parker followed, and Jack came behind. The young lady looked around her. The faint wind stirred the hair at her temples. She gazed steadily at the little town lying seemingly so close. Jack noticed how thin and pale she had grown. "Come along, Mistress!" called out Blackbeard. The men made way for her with a sort of dumb deference as she crossed the deck. They held the boat close to the side of the sloop, and the Captain and Morton and Hands helped the young lady into it. Then the Captain took his place beside her.

"You jump aboard up there in the bow," said he to Jack; and then, as soon as Jack took his place, the men pushed off and began rowing away toward the shore.

Jack watched the wharf as it came nearer and nearer. He could see that one of the white men who stood there looked haggard and pinched as though with illness. He and the other white man and the negroes stared curiously at them. The next moment the bow of the boat struck with a bump against the landing, and Jack jumped up upon the wharf. "Come here," said the Captain, "and help the young lady ashore." Jack hurried toward her. He reached out his hand, and the next moment felt her grasp, soft and warm. She held tightly to him as he helped her up from the boat to the landing under the gaze of the men on the wharf.

Jack followed the Captain and the young lady up the crooked path to the house. From a distance the house had looked picturesque — almost beautiful — hidden among the soft green foliage of the cypress-trees; but it looked shabby and weather-worn and even squalid upon a nearer approach. A woman who was between twenty and thirty years old stood in the doorway looking at them as they came up the path. Her face was not uncomely, but was heavy and dull. Her hair was light and colorless, and was tied up under a dirty cap. She was in her bare feet; she wore a jacket without sleeves, partly pinned, partly buttoned, and under it a flaming red petticoat. She stared at them with wide eyes, but the pirate said nothing at all to her, and she stood aside as he led the way directly into the house. The dirty floor was bare and uncarpeted. There was a table and two chairs. Some tin boxes and a couple of candlesticks, caked with grease, stood upon the mantel that held a loud-ticking clock. The room, with its bare plastered walls, was naked and cheerless, and was filled with a rank, smoky smell. "Sit down, Mistress," said Blackbeard; and then, as Miss Eleanor Parker obeyed him, "This is my wife," said he, "and she 'll look after you for a while. D' ye hear, Betty? You're to look after the young lady. Go up-stairs now, and get the spare room ready, and be as lively about it as you can."

Jack followed the woman up the steep, rickety stairs to the sagging floor above. "Here, this is the room," said she, opening the door into a room directly under the roof. It looked out through two windows across the creek to

the swamp on the other side, a half-mile or so away.

"Who is she?" said the woman to Jack, as he followed her into the room and laid the traveling-bag upon the bed.

"The young lady down-stairs? She 's Miss Eleanor Parker," said Jack.

"A grand, fine lady, be n't she?" And Jack nodded.

"Well, you trig up the room a little, now, won't you? I 'll just go put on another dress, for, d' ye see, I did n't look for Ned to bring such fine company. You 'd better fetch up a pail of water, too, for I reckon she 'll be wanting to wash herself."

Blackbeard's wife was gone for a long time. The pirate walked restlessly and irritably up and down the room, stopping once at the mantel-shelf to fill up a pipe of tobacco. The young lady sat impassively, with her hands lying in her lap, gazing absently upon the floor. Once or twice the pirate glared with angry impatience at the door. At last there was the sound of footsteps — this time not of bare feet — clattering down the stairs, and a second later the pirate's wife opened the door and entered the room. She had changed her slatternly dress for a medley of finery. She wore high-heeled shoes, and silk stockings with red clocks. She courtesied to the young lady as Blackbeard stared at her.

"If you 'll come along with me now, Madam," said she, with an air, "I 'll show you to your room."

CHAPTER XXVII.

AT BATH TOWN.

THE pirates, excepting a few who came from neighboring plantations, lived in the town. By noon they had all gone home excepting Dred. "You and Chris Dred will have to share one room," the pirate's wife had said to Jack. "He 's lived here ever since he came back from Virginia. He sleeps in the corner room. There ain't no bed in t' other, so, now the young lady's come, you 'll have to share with him." And Jack had answered, "Why, that suits me well enough, Mrs. Teach."

"Look 'e, boy," said Captain Teach to Jack the next morning, "I want you to take this letter up to Bath Town and give it to Mr.

Knight. "You'll take one of the boats. Dred's aboard of the sloop. Tell him to send a couple of black men to take you up."

"Very well," said Jack.

As he stood on the wharf looking out across to the sloop, he could see Dred moving about directing the negroes whom the Captain had borrowed from a neighboring plantation, and who were washing down and holystoning the deck. Everything was dripping with the water that flowed out of the scuppers in dirty streams, and in which Dred pattered in his bare feet. There was a dinghy alongside, in which the black men who were busy at work had doubtless come off from the shore.

Jack called out to Dred, and he came to the side of the sloop, holding to the ratlines. "I have got to take this letter to the town," called Jack, holding up the note in his hand, "and the Captain says that you're to let two of the black men take me up." And Dred, who was smoking a short black pipe, nodded his head in reply. He turned, and Jack saw him speaking to the negroes. In answer two of them dropped the buckets from which they were washing the deck, and, scrambling over the side into the dinghy, pushed off and came rowing toward him.

The town appeared singularly interesting to Jack as he walked up. The main street with its dirt sidewalk was shaded with trees, through which filtered uncertain, wavering spots of sunlight. The day was hot; a dry wind rustled the leaves overhead, and a belated cicada trilled its shrill note that, rising and falling, pulsed whirling away into silence. The houses, mostly built of frame, were small and not very clean. They nearly all stood close to the street. A sort of indolent life stirred in the place, and further down the street a lot of men were lounging in front of a building that looked as if it might be a store of some sort. Among the group Jack noticed several of his late companions, and he knew instinctively that they were talking about the events that had lately occurred in Virginia. As he drew near to them he heard one of them say, "There's the boy now"; and the faces of all were turned toward him.

"Hullo, Jack!" called out one of the others. "What do you do up here in Bath Town?"

"Why," said Jack, "the Captain sent me up with a note to Mr. Knight."

"To Mr. Knight?" said one man whom he did not know. "Why, I reckon Mr. Knight be n't in town. He went off across the country the day afore yesterday, and I reckon he be n't back yet."

"Yes, he be back," said another; "anyway, I am sure his horse is back again, for I saw Bob a-rubbing it down as I came by the stable a half-hour or so ago."

They lounged impassively as they talked, and made no move to aid Jack in his business. "Well, anyhow," said Jack, "I've got to find Mr. Knight if he's in town; and so where can I come to him?"

"Come here," said one of his late companions aboard the sloop; "I'll show you." He led him out into the middle of the street. "D'ye see that open place yonder? Well, that's where the church stands; just beyond that—you can see it from here—is the house. 'Tis the very next house to the church. Well, that's Mr. Knight's house."

"How's the young mistress by now, Jack?" said one of the men.

"She's well enough," said Jack shortly. He did not choose to talk about the young lady.

"She looked kind of peakish, to my mind, when she came ashore," said the man. But Jack, making no answer, turned and walked on down the street in the direction that had been pointed out to him.

Mr. Knight's house was built of brick, and was rather better-looking than the houses that surrounded it. Jack found that the Secretary was at home, and was shown into his office. He was smoking a pipe of tobacco and looking over some papers which littered the writing-desk at which he sat. He was a rather thin, dark man, not ill-looking, but nervous and jerky in his movements. He wore a black cloth skull-cap upon his head, and Jack saw a fine wig of black hair hanging behind the door.

He turned his head and looked over his shoulder at Jack as the boy came into the room. "Well," said he, "what d'ye want?"

"Why," said Jack, "Captain Teach hath sent me up with this note for you, sir."

"Oh! he did, did he? Well, let me have it."

He leaned back in his chair and reached out for the note, which Jack handed to him, and which he tore open quickly and sharply. Jack noticed how the letter trembled in his nervous hand as he held it. He watched Mr. Knight's eyes as they traveled down the page until they reached the bottom, and then as he turned over the paper to make sure that there was nothing upon the other side. "Very well," said he, when he had ended. "Tell the Captain that I'll be there to-morrow."

Mr. Knight came down to the pirate's house at the appointed time. Captain Teach stood at the door watching him as he came up the crooked path. The pirate had been playing upon his guitar, and he stood holding it under his arm. Mr. Knight limped slightly, and walked with a cane. The evening was warm, and he carried his hat in his hand. Jack stood around the end of the house, also looking at the Colonial Secretary as he approached. "How d' ye do, Captain?" said Mr. Knight, as soon as he had come near enough.

"Why, I 'm well enough," said Captain Teach surlily, taking his pipe out of his mouth to reply. "Hands and Morton and Dred are all here, and we 've been waiting for you for some time now. Come in."

He led the way into the room where the three of whom he had spoken were sitting smoking. Mr. Knight nodded to the others. "Well, Captain," said he, as he took his seat and laid his hat and cane upon the table, "what 's this business you want to see me about? What 's this I hear about a young lady you 've brought down from Virginia?"

"Why," said Captain Teach, "I reckon 't is just about as you 've heard it." He had laid aside his guitar and had gone to the mantel-shelf, and was striking a flint and steel to light the candle. "I brought a young lady down with me from Virginia—she 's staying here with my wife."

"Well, what 's your business with me?"

"I 'll tell you just exactly what the business is we want of you, and just what we 've been doing. Do you know of Colonel Birchall Parker?"

"Why, to be sure I do," said Mr. Knight.

"Why do you ask me such a thing as that, Captain?"

"Well, I 've carried off his daughter; we 've got her here in this house."

Mr. Knight sat quite still for a long time. "Then 't is just as I heard this morning," said he at last; "but indeed I could n't believe it, nor how you would dare do such a thing as to carry off Colonel Birchall Parker's daughter. 'T is the maddest thing I ever heard tell of in all my life, and if I were you I 'd send the young lady back just as soon as ever I could."

"Why, then, Mr. Secretary," said Captain Teach, "I 'm much beholden to you for advice, but just you listen to me for a little, will you?—and give me time to say my say before you advise me. I 'm not going to send her back just now, in spite of your advice, nor until her father pays a good round sum to get her back. I tell you what 't is, Mr. Secretary Knight, there be a greater one than you or me mixed up in this business—no less a one, if you believe me, than Mr. Dick Parker."

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Knight, "Mr. Richard Parker! What d' ye mean by that?"

"Why, I mean just what I say," said Captain Teach. "Mr. Parker is the one man in this, and we manage it as his agents. So you may see for yourself we 're not so likely to come to any harm as ye might think; for if we come to any harm it drags him along with us. 'T was his plan and by his information that the young lady was taken—and more than that, his plan is that you shall write to him as though to give him the first information of her being here in the keep of the Pamlico pirates. Then he 'll go to Colonel Parker and make the best bargain he can to have her redeemed."

"Stop a bit, Captain!" interrupted Mr. Knight. "You 're going all too fast in this matter. You seem to be pleased to count on me in this business without asking me anything about it. I tell you plain that this is too serious a thing for me to tamper with. Why, d' ye think I 'm such a villain as to trade in such business as this at the risk of my neck?"

"Well," said the pirate Captain. "That is just as you choose, Mr. Secretary. But I don't see that you need bring yourself into any danger at all. 'T is I and those with me," said he,

sweeping his hands toward Morton and Hands and Dred, "who really take all the risk, and I take it even though I know that if anything should happen, you 'd throw us overboard without waiting a second moment to think about it."

Mr. Knight sat in thoughtful silence for a while. "What money is there in this for you?" said he, looking up sharply.

"That I don't know neither," said the other. "Mr. Parker will manage that at t' other end."

"What does Mr. Richard Parker expect for his share in this precious conspiracy?"

"Why," said Captain Teach, "there he drives a mightily hard bargain. He demands a half of all for his share, and he will not take a farthing less."

Mr. Knight whistled to himself. "Well," said he at last, "he does indeed drive hard at you, Captain. But, after all, I do not know that I can be easier upon you. For if I go into this business it 'll be upon the same stand as Mr. Parker takes—I will have the half that is left after he has taken his half."

Captain Teach burst out laughing. "Why," said he, "'t is one thing for Mr. Parker to make his terms, and 't is another thing for you to do it. I tell you what shall be your share of it, and you 'll have to rest easy with that. Your share shall be as it hath always been: I shall have my third first of all, and you shall stand in for your share with Hands and Morton and Dred as you 've always done."

Mr. Knight shook his head. "Very well, then," said the Captain harshly, pushing back his chair and rising as he spoke. "If you choose to throw away what may drop into your hands without any risk to yourself, you may do so and welcome. I 'll manage the business as best I can without you."

"Stop a bit, Captain," said Mr. Knight; "you 're too hasty by half. Just what is it you want me to do in this business?"

"Why," said Captain Teach, "I 've told you in part what I want you to do. 'T is first of all to write a letter to Mr. Richard Parker saying that you have certain information that the young lady, Colonel Parker's daughter, is in the hands of certain pirates, and that they won't give her up unless a ransom is paid for

her. Ye may add also,—as is the truth,—that she appears to be in the way of falling sick if she is n't taken away home pretty quick. Then, after you 've writ your letter, you must hunt up a decent, responsible merchant-captain or master to take it up to Virginia and see that it is delivered into Mr. Richard Parker's hands."

Mr. Knight looked very serious.

"And have you thought of what danger you 'd be in if she were to die on your hands?"

"Yes, I have," said the other; "and so you need n't say any more about it. Tell me, will you take in with this business, or will you not?"

"Humph!" said Mr. Knight, rubbing his chin thoughtfully. He sat for a long time looking broodingly at the flickering candle-light. "There 's Nat Jackson hath gone up the river for a cargo of wood shingles. He 's looked for back here on Friday. 'T is like enough he would be your man to take the letter if I go into this business."

"I dare say he 'll do well enough," said Captain Teach impatiently. "But tell me, what is your answer, Mr. Secretary? Will you go into this business or not?"

"I 'll tell you to-morrow," said Mr. Knight. "If I go into it I 'll send you a draft of the letter to Mr. Parker. Will that suit you?"

"Why," said the other sullenly, "'t will have to suit; but methinks you might give a plain yes or no without so much beating about the bush, or taking so much time to think it over."

Jack and the pirate's wife sat in the kitchen. They could hear the grumble of talk from the room beyond. "I tell you what 't is," said Jack, breaking the silence, "to my mind the young lady don't look anything like so well as when I saw her in Virginia."

"I don't know why she 'd be sick," said the woman. "We give her good enough victuals to eat, and she does n't lack for company. I 'm sure I sat with her nigh all afternoon, and she answered me pretty enough when I talked to her."

By and by they heard the party in the other room break up, and Mr. Knight's parting words as he left the house. Presently Dred came into the kitchen. He looked dull and heavy-eyed. "I reckon I must 'a' got a fever," said

he; "my head beats fit to split—I 'm that hot I 'm all afire. D' ye have any spirits of bark here, Mistress?"

The pirate's wife got up and went to the closet, and brought out a bottle of bitter bark from which she poured a large dose into a tea-cup. Dred drank it off at a gulp, making a hideous, wry face. Then he wiped his hand across his mouth.

The letter reached Mr. Richard Parker, some two weeks later, at Marlborough, where he was then staying. The great house was full of that subdued bustle that speaks so plainly of illness. The invalid was Colonel Parker. In the shock and despair that followed the abduction of his daughter, the gout had seized him again. The doctor was in the house all the time. "How is my brother this morning?" Mr. Richard Parker had asked of him.

"Why, sir, I see but very little change," said the doctor. "His honor does not suffer so much, but the gout still clings to his stomach, and is not to be driven out."

It was some little time after the doctor had so spoken that Mr. Knight's letter was given to Mr. Parker. He had eaten his breakfast alone, and the plate and broken pieces of food still lay spread before him. He read and re-read the note. He sat perfectly still, without a shade of change passing over his handsome face. "T is indeed true," said part of the letter, "that the young lady appears to be really ill, and if her father doth not presently redeem her out of their hands she may indeed fall into a decline." And then was added, in a postscript to the passage, "*This is, I assure you, indeed the truth,*" and the words were underscored.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

AN EXPEDITION.

ONE day Hands, who had been making a visit at a plantation, was brought to Blackbeard's house, shot through the knee. There had been a quarrel at the plantation, and he had been shot by accident. The men lifted him, groaning, from the ox-cart in which he was brought, and carried him up-stairs. Dred was sick in the bed, but he had to turn out to give place to the

wounded man. After that he and Jack slept in the kitchen.

Dred had been in bed for some three weeks, and Blackbeard had been away from home for some days in Bath Town—a longer stay than he commonly made. Then one morning he suddenly returned from the town.

Jack and Betty Teach were at breakfast in the kitchen. Dred lay upon a bench, his head upon a coat rolled into a pillow.

"You 'd better come and try to eat something," said Betty Teach. "I do believe if you tried to eat a bit you could eat, and to my mind you 'd be the better for it."

Dred shook his head weakly without opening his eyes. Jack helped himself to a piece of bacon and a large sweet potato. "Now, do come and eat a bit," urged the woman.

"I don't want anything to eat," said Dred irritably; "I wish you 'd let me alone." He opened his eyes for a brief moment, and then closed them again.

"Well," said Betty, "you need n't snap a body's head off. I only ask you to eat for your own good—if you don't choose to eat, why, don't eat. You 'll be as testy as Hands, by and by—and, to be sure, I never saw anybody like he is with his sore leg. You 'd think he was the only man in the world that had ever been shot, the way he do go on."

"T was a pretty bad hurt," said Jack, with his mouth full, "and that 's the truth. 'T is a wonder to me how he did not lose his leg. 'T is an awful-looking wound." Dred listened with his eyes closed.

Just then the door opened and the Captain came in, and at once they ceased speaking. He looked very glum and preoccupied. Dred opened his eyes where he lay, and looked heavily at him. The Captain did not notice any of the three, but went to the row of pegs against the wall and hung up his hat, and then picked up a chair and brought it over to the table. "Have you had your breakfast yet, Ned?" asked his wife.

"No," said he briefly. He sat quite impassively as she bustlingly fetched him a plate and a knife and fork.

"Chris," said he, "I got some news from Charleston last night. Jim Johnson 's come

on, and he says that a packet to Boston in Massachusetts was about starting three or four days after he left. There's a big prize in it, I do believe, and I sent word out around the town to all the men that we were to be off to-day."

Jack sat listening intently. He did not understand quite what was meant, and he was very much interested to comprehend. He could gather that the pirate was going away seemingly on a cruise, and then he began wondering if he was to be taken along. Again Dred had opened his eyes and was lying looking at the Captain, who, upon his part, steadfastly regarded the sick man for a moment or two without speaking. "D' ye think ye can go along?" said Blackbeard presently.

"Why, no," said Dred weakly. "You may see for yourself that I can't go along. How could I go along? Why, I be a bedrid man."

"But how am I to get along without you?" said Blackbeard savagely. "That's what I want to know. There's Hands in bed with his broken knee, and you down with the fever, and only Morton and me to run everything aboard the two sloops. For they do say that the packet's armed; and if so we'll have to take both sloops."

Jack had listened with a keener and keener interest. He felt that he must know just what all the talk meant. "Where are you going, Captain?" said he. "What are you going to do?"

The pirate turned a lowering look upon him. "You mind your own business, and don't you concern yourself with what does n't concern you," he said gruffly. Then he added, "Wherever we're going, you're not going along, and you may rest certain of that. You've got to stay home here with Betty, for she can't get along with the girl and two sick men to look after."

"He means he's going on a cruise, Jack," said Dred from the bench. "They're going to cruise outside and stop the Charleston packet."

"I don't see," said Jack to the pirate Captain, "that I'm any better off here than I was up in Virginia. I had to serve Mr. Parker there, and I have to slave for you here, without getting anything for it."

Blackbeard glowered heavily at him for a few moments without speaking. "If ye like," said he, "I'll send you back to Virginia to your master. I dare say he'd be glad enough to get you back again." And then Jack did not venture to answer anything. "Somebody'll have to stay to look after all these sick people," Blackbeard continued, "and why not you as well as another?"

The pirate's wife had left the table, and was busy getting some food together on a pewter platter. "You take this up-stairs to the young lady, Jack," said she, "while I get something for Hands to eat. I never see such trouble in all my life as the three of 'em make together—the young lady and Hands and Chris Dred here."

"When d' ye sail?" Dred asked of the pirate Captain, and Jack lingered with the plate in his hand to hear the answer.

"Why, just as soon as we can get the men together. The longer we leave it, the less chance we'll have of coming across the packet." Jack waited a little while longer, but Blackbeard had fallen to at his breakfast, and he saw that no more was to be said just then. So he went up-stairs with the food, his feet clattering noisily as he ascended the dark, narrow stairway. After that Blackbeard ate for a while in silence.

"How's the young lady?" said he at last.

"Why, I don't see as she's any better," said Betty Teach; and the pirate frowned gloomily.

At last he ended his meal and pushed back his chair suddenly.

"I'll go up and see Hands," said he. He went up-stairs noisily. Jack followed him, standing in the door of the sick-room.

"Phew!" said the Captain, and he went across the room and opened the window. Hands, unconscious of the heavy, fetid smell of the sick-room, was sitting in bed propped up by a pillow, and smoking his pipe of tobacco. He was very restless and uneasy.

"What's going on?" he asked.

"Why," said Blackbeard, "we're going off on a cruise."

"Going off on a cruise?" said Hands.

"Yes," said Blackbeard, as he sat himself down on the edge of the bed. "I was up in

town last night, along with Knight, when Jim Johnson came in. He 'd just come back from Charleston, and brought news of the Boston packet sailing. He says it was the talk then that there was a chist o' money aboard."

Hands laid aside his pipe of tobacco, and began growling.

"What did Jack Trivett mean, anyway—to shoot me wantonly through the knee?" He tried to move himself in the bed. "M-m-m!" he grunted, groaning. He clenched the fist upon which he rested, making a wry face as he shifted himself a little on the bed.

The pirate Captain watched him curiously as he labored to move himself. "How do you feel to-day?" asked he.

"Oh, I feel pretty well," said Hands, groaning again, "only when I try to move a bit. I reckon I 'll never be able to use my leg again, to speak on."

Betty Teach came in with a platter of food. "What ha' ye got there?" asked the sick man, craning his neck.

"Why," said she, "a bit of pork and some potatoes."

"Potatoes and pork," said he. "'T is always potatoes and pork and nothing else." She made no reply, but set the platter down upon the bed and stood watching him. "When do you sail?" asked Hands.

"As soon as we can," said Blackbeard briefly.

It was a cloudy, windy day. When Jack came down to the wharf there was a great air of bustle and preparation. Other boats had come down from the town, making six in all, and another was just coming. A group of three or four men were lounging at the end of the wharf, and as many more sat in the boat waiting, perhaps, for the Captain. "Hullo, Jack!" called out one of the pirates—a young fellow not much older than Jack himself—as Jack joined the group. "D' ye go along with us?"

"Why, no," said Jack, "I don't; I 've got to stay at home and nurse Hands and Dred."

Blackbeard ate his dinner ashore; and it was

some time after noon before all the men had come down from the town and the sloops were ready to sail. The larger vessel of the two got off some time—a half-hour or so—before the other, in which the Captain himself sailed. The two were to meet at Ocracock. The clouds had blown away, and the autumn sun shone warm and strong. Dred had come down from the house with the Captain to see the departure. The Captain carried his guitar with him. He handed it carefully into the boat before he himself descended into it. Dred and Jack stood on the edge of the landing, watching the rowboat as it pulled away from the wharf toward the sloop, the Captain sitting in the stern. The deck of the sloop was crowded with many figures, and from the midst of them the long-gun in the bows pointed out ahead silently and grimly. The click-click-clicking of the capstan sounded ceaselessly, and, with iterated clatter, the main-sail rose higher and higher apeak. Still Jack and Dred stood on the end of the wharf watching the sloop as, the sail filling with the wind, it heeled slowly over, and then, with gathering speed, swept sluggishly away from its moorings, leaving behind it a swelling wake, in which towed the boat that had brought the Captain aboard. They watched it as it ran further and further out into the river, growing smaller and smaller in the distance, and then, when a great way off, coming about. They watched it until, with the wind now astern, it slipped swiftly in behind the jutting point of swamp and was cut off by the intervening trees. Everything seemed to have grown strangely dull and silent. The two stood inertly for a while in the silence. The water lapped and splashed and gurgled against the wharf, and a flock of blue jays from the wet swamp on the other side of the creek began suddenly calling out their shrill, noisy clamor. Presently Dred groaned. "I 'm going back to the house," he said; "I ain't fit to be out, and that 's a fact. I never had a fever to lay me out like this. I 'm going up to the house, and I ain't going to come out ag'in till I 'm fit to be out."

(To be continued.)



"DEAR ME, LUCY ANN, IF YOU'RE NOT MORE CAREFULLER OF YOURSELF, YOU'LL NOT LAST TILL CHRISTMAS!"

CHRIS AND THE WONDERFUL LAMP.

BY ALBERT STEARNS.

CHAPTER I.

"NAOW, haow much am I offered fer this beautiful lamp? Quit laffin' naow, an' jest cast your eyes over it. This here lamp, I am informed, cost Perfesser Huxter over one hundred dollars on accaount of its great age, but yeou kin hev it at yeour own price. It's in perfect order, an' with a leetle polishin' 'll make a han'some parlor ornament. Naow, what am I bid?"

There were in attendance at this "Grand Sale" (as the handbills put it) "of the effects of the late Professor Joel Huxter, consisting of household furniture and many other rare old curios," the usual number of curiosity-seekers and idlers, with a thin sprinkling of buyers.

It was well for poor old Professor Huxter's peace of mind that he had not foreseen the disposal which was finally to be made of these "rare old curios," collected by him during a long lifetime and at the expense of great labor and self-sacrifice. Now that he was dead, they were being sold for a mere fraction of their actual value, for offering them to the good people of South Dusenbury was like casting pearls before swine.

The professor's antique vases and other curious specimens of the handiwork of bygone ages were, to these simple yokels, only so many second-hand pots and pans, and were sold at prices that would have made an antiquarian's blood boil.

But there was no antiquarian present—only twenty or more women, who sacrilegiously handled the professor's treasures, and commented cynically upon them; half a dozen men, including the village postmaster and the "oldest inhabitant"; and a school-boy, who lingered near the door and surveyed the scene with evident curiosity.

"Ain't nobody goin' tew bid nothin' fer this

here vallyble lamp?" went on the auctioneer. "Start it, somebody—dew!"

"I 'll give ten cents for it," said the school-boy.

"Gone, b' gosh!" said the auctioneer, with startling promptness. "I begun tew be afeard I wa'n't goin' tew git red of it. Come right up, Chris Wagstaff; hand over yeour dime an' take persession o' yeour property."

The boy, a rather good-looking lad of thirteen or fourteen, came bashfully forward, produced two nickels from the depths of his trousers' pocket, and took the lamp from the auctioneer's hands.

"Biggest bargain yeou ever made, Chris," said that worthy, facetiously. "It may be the makin' o' yer everlastin' fortin'. Keep it a couple o' hundred years, an' yeou may re'lize han'somely on 't; fer, 'cordin' tew Perfesser Huxter, these kind o' things is wuth more an' more the older they git."

Amid the laughter that followed this sally, Chris beat a retreat with his prize. With blushing face, he hurried up the village street, and soon turned into an unfrequented lane.

"It is n't much to look at, and that's a fact," he muttered, seating himself upon a stone and critically surveying the lamp. "But I wanted something to remember the old professor by, for he always seemed to like me, and treated me better than he did any one else. Anyhow, it must be worth over ten cents. Bill Skidmore does n't know any more about auctioneering than I do about—astrology. Well, it's a mighty queer-looking old lamp—must be about a million years old. I wonder what that inscription on the side is; it looks like Chinese. I 'll keep the old thing on the mantelpiece in my room. Guess I can polish it up so that it will look pretty well."

Chris began the polishing process at once by vigorously rubbing one side of the lamp with his coat-sleeve. Scarcely had he done so when

a sound like a clap of thunder caused him to spring to his feet. A thick cloud of smoke, the origin of which was not apparent, surrounded him. It rapidly cleared away, and the startled boy saw standing before him a figure the like of which he never had seen unless in the pages of a picture-book by some highly imaginative writer, or in a dream after an indigestible supper.

It was the figure of a being perhaps ten feet in height and clad in an Oriental costume embroidered with strange devices. Its hair was thick and waving and of snowy whiteness, as was its beard. Fixing its dark, piercing eyes upon the boy's face, this creature demanded in a deep, thunderous voice:

"Well, what is it?"

"I—I d-don't quite understand y-you, sir," stammered the terrified Chris.

"I ask you," said the strange apparition, "what it is that you want? As you are, of course, aware, I am the slave of that lamp and of its owner."

"Why, good gracious!" exclaimed Chris, gaining courage, "you don't—you can't mean that this is Aladdin's lamp?"

"Yes," was the reply; "a former owner of the lamp was named Aladdin. Fine, genial fellow, too; always liked him, though we parted on bad terms. Is he a friend of yours?"

"Friend of mine!" gasped Chris, pinching himself to make sure that he was awake; "why, he's been dead thousands of years—that is, if he ever lived at all."

"Indeed?" returned the genie—for that he was one of these supernatural beings it seemed impossible longer to doubt. "I'm sorry to hear of his death. As for his having lived, I can testify to that, for he made things extremely lively for me for a while—kept me working day and night, with hardly time for meals. But to business: what can I do for you?"

"I don't know," said the bewildered lad. "Give me a minute to think."

"Take all the time you want," responded the genie, affably. "I'll be glad to do anything I can for you. Would you like me to give you a trifling exhibition of my power by transplanting this entire village to the Desert of Sahara, inside of ten seconds? It might amuse you, and would really be no trouble to me at all."

"No, no," said Chris hastily; "don't think of such a thing."

"Just as you say," grumbled the genie, who seemed somewhat disappointed; "though I could bring it right back again if you wanted me to. Suppose I run up a sixteen-story palace with all modern improvements for you while you wait?"

"No, no," said Chris, somewhat pettishly; for the idea that this awful being was, after all, merely his slave was already becoming a familiar one to him. "Keep still, can't you? and let me reflect."

"Enough said," returned the genie, with an injured air; and he seated himself upon the ground, clasped his knees with his hands, and closed his eyes.

The thought occurred to Chris that if any one happened to come along, the situation would be rather embarrassing. How could he explain the genie's presence without revealing what he had already determined to keep a profound secret—the wondrous power he had so unexpectedly acquired?

"I say!" he cried; and the genie opened his eyes, and sleepily asked:

"Well, what is it?"

"No offense," said Chris, who felt some delicacy about referring to the matter, "but—but as you're not acquainted in these parts, and as you are so—so different from other folk, I'd rather not have you seen—at least, not just at present."

"I see; you want me to make myself invisible. That's very easily done. Give the old lamp a rub when you are ready for me again."

"Hold on!" interposed Chris, for the genie had already begun to fade away; "when you come back, is it necessary for you to be accompanied by thunder and smoke and all that sort of thing?"

"Not absolutely necessary," replied the genie, with a surprised look; "but it has been the custom of genii from time immemorial."

"Well, it's a mighty poor custom, I think," said Chris; "and I'd be obliged if you would n't do it any more."

"Just as you say," returned the genie, sullenly.

"And another thing: if what I have read is true, a genie can take any shape he chooses."



"THIS CREATURE DEMANDED IN A DEEP, THUNDEROUS VOICE: 'WELL, WHAT IS IT?'"

"Yes," replied Chris's companion, with animation; "and if you say the word, I will guarantee to take one hundred separate and distinct shapes, including a complete change of costume in each case, inside of ten minutes.

modern costume, his hands grasping the lapels of his coat, appeared on the exact spot where the genie had stood when he faded from view.

"Well, here I am," said this personage, discontentedly; "but I must say I don't like this

Shall I begin? And how shall I appear first?"

"No, no," said Chris; "I wish you would n't make so many foolish suggestions. I only wanted to say that there's no sense in your appearing as an old man nearly a dozen feet high, when you have your choice of so many more attractive shapes."

"Force of habit — merely force of habit," said the genie stiffly. "I will try to meet your wishes on my return. Anything more?"

"Not just now."

The genie vanished.

Chris drew a long breath. It all seemed like a dream, but it was n't one. The wonderful lamp lay upon the ground where it had fallen at the moment of the genie's sudden appearance; yonder were the old sawmill, and the Methodist Church, and the railway depot, and the Dusenbury Academy.

The Dusenbury Academy! Chris's heart sank as he gazed at its cold, gray walls. Then a sudden happy thought struck him, at which his face lighted up, and he laughed aloud.

"I'll do it!" he exclaimed. "If he's as powerful as he pretends to be, and as he used to be when Aladdin owned the lamp, it will be a mere trifle for him to do what I wish."

The boy seized the lamp and rubbed it. Instantly, the figure of a little old man dressed in

commonplace way of making my appearance. You might allow me a little red fire at least."

"Is that you?" exclaimed Chris, startled in spite of himself. "I never should have known you."

"I suppose not; I've changed a good deal since we last met. You're not quite used to my ways yet. Well, have you made up your mind what you want?"

"Yes."

"Then why are n't you there now?" inquired the genie. "Is n't there any school to-day?"

"Well, yes," confessed Chris, blushing a little; "but I—well, the fact is I did n't feel like going."

"Not to put too fine a point on it," said the genie, "you are playing hookey."

He looked, in his new guise, so remarkably like little old Professor Brown, the Latin teacher, that Chris actually quailed before his glance.



"THE FIGURE OF A LITTLE OLD MAN DRESSED IN MODERN COSTUME APPEARED."

"What is it? eight or ten million dollars' worth of precious stones? Why, certainly, I—"

"Nonsense!" interrupted Chris. "What do I want of precious stones? What I am going to ask of you is something a good deal easier than that."

"Nothing could be easier."

"Will you *please* stop interrupting? Do you see that big stone building over yonder?"

"Call *that* big?" exclaimed the genie, scornfully. "You ought to have seen the palace I built for Aladdin. Why, honest, it—"

"Never mind that now. That building is the Dusenbury Academy, and I am one of its pupils."

"That's about it," he replied sheepishly.

"Humph! Well, what do you want me to do?"

"I'll tell you. You can fix yourself up to look like me, can't you?"

"Of course I can."

"Well, do it."

The next instant, Chris saw, standing before him, a boy the exact counterpart of himself, even to the minutest detail of costume.

"Well, that beats me!" he exclaimed, in amazement.

"That's nothing," said the genie, complacently. "What do you want me to do next?"

"Do you understand algebra?"

"I should say I did."

"I don't, and I don't believe I ever shall. Somehow, I can't get it through my head. It was algebra that kept me from going to school to-day. Now, you take these books"—Chris produced them from under his coat—"and go up to the academy. You'll be in time for the recitation in algebra. You're sure you can pass yourself off for me?"

"There's no room for doubt on that point"; and the genie turned to go.

"Hold on a minute! I forgot to tell you one thing: you'll be thrashed for being late. You don't mind that, do you?"

"Oh, not in the least," replied the genie, sarcastically. "I shall rather enjoy it, I imagine. Say," he added appealingly, "can't you think of anything for me to do except this? It's very humiliating, don't you know, for a spirit of my power and influence to submit to this sort of thing."

"I know it must be," said Chris, uncompromisingly, "but I can't help it. Make any good excuse you can think of for being late, and maybe you'll escape the thrashing. I doubt it, though; and I advise you to hurry along, for the later you are the worse caning you are likely to get."

Upon hearing this, the genie started off at a rapid pace.

Chris stood and watched him until he was out of sight. The spectacle of *himself*, his books under his arm, climbing up the hill that led to the academy, and finally disappearing within the portals of that institution, aroused very singular sensations within his breast. He was not exactly satisfied with the condition of affairs. To be sure, he had escaped the algebra recitation, and the genie was going to suffer his punishment; but would he not to-morrow be as badly off as ever?

And suppose the genie, who could not be expected to know much about the rules and regulations of establishments like the Dusenbury Academy, should in some way misbehave himself and bring down disgrace upon the head of his master? Chris resolved that his double should disappear forever as soon as school was over.

Taking up his lamp, the boy walked slowly

homeward. He had gone but a short distance when he met old Jared Beckwith, a neighboring farmer, returning from market.

"Why, haow 's this?" cried the old man, bringing his team to a standstill. "Haow 'd yeou git daown here, Chris?"

"What do you mean, Mr. Beckwith?"

"Wal," was the response, "this is the blamed-est thing ever I see. I met you jest naow up by the 'cademy, an' haow yeou got daown here is more 'n I kin figger aout. Ain't tew on yeou, be there?"

Chris hurried away, reflecting that he must be more careful if he did not want his secret to become public property.

"Let me see," he mused; "I know mother's out, and there's nobody in the house but Huldah. I'll steal up to my room and hide the lamp, and then I'll go and head off the genie on his way back from school."

The first part of this program was successfully carried out. Chris reached his room unseen, concealed the lamp, and beat a retreat without being discovered. But when he took his position in a lane through which he knew the genie must pass, he was startled to see that eccentric spirit approaching, not alone, but in company with Fanny Ingalls, Doctor Ingalls's daughter, for whom Chris had long cherished a somewhat tender feeling.

The boy hastily concealed himself behind a clump of sumac bushes.

"Really, Chris," he heard Fanny say, as she and her companion passed, "you astonished everybody with your algebra to-day. Why, it was only Monday that Professor Cipher said you were the worst pupil in algebra in the school, and yet this morning you asked him questions that he could n't answer, and worked out some of the hardest problems in the book, as quick as lightning. I think you're awful smart, Chris."

"Oh, what I did this morning was nothing," said the genie, airily; and Chris heard no more.

"I'll put a short stop to this sort of thing," he said fiercely. "When he comes back from dinner, I'll get him to change himself into something else in double-quick time."

But, as luck would have it, Chris's mother accompanied the genie back to school, and the

boy had no chance to speak to him. And after school a number of the boys went home with him and played in the barn until dark. Then they departed, and the genie went into the house, apparently without a thought of his master.

All this the wildly indignant and half-famished Chris observed from a distance.

"How long does he mean to keep up this sort of thing?" he exclaimed, as, seated by the roadside, he saw his father and mother and his double seat themselves at the supper-table. "He must know that I am waiting out here somewhere, and he'll come out after supper."

But he did not. When the meal was over, the genie and Chris's father played a game of checkers, and then the bogus Chris arose and went up-stairs.

In about ten minutes the boy saw the light in his own sleeping-room extinguished. His double was now undoubtedly snugly tucked under the sheets, while he stood, shivering and hungry, outside his father's house.

"Oh, if I only had that lamp, I'd bring him down in a jiffy!" he muttered. "But if I went in to get it now, I should have to tell the whole story, and I won't do that. I'll wait until morning—then I can get it easily enough."

He managed to make his way into the barn, and was soon fast asleep in the haymow.

CHAPTER II.

THE hoarse crowing of a rooster awakened Chris from a dream in which he and his double had been engaged in a hand-to-hand combat, with the odds very much in favor of the genie.

"It's to-morrow morning," muttered the boy, sleepily. "It won't be long before everything is all right again. I can slip in quietly now, and the way I'll make him change himself back into an old man won't be slow. Gracious, how hungry I am! It seems as if I could not wait till breakfast-time."

He climbed down the ladder and stepped out briskly in the fresh, clear morning air.

"I suppose *he's* asleep," he mused bitterly. "It would be just my luck if he did not get up till eight o'clock. But what's the matter? There's a light in my room! And mother's up there! Maybe—"

At this moment the front door flew open and Chris's father rushed out, half dressed. He ran across the road to Dr. Ingalls's house, and gave the bell a violent pull. Almost immediately the doctor's head appeared at an upper window, and Chris heard him ask:

"Who's there?"

"It's Wagstaff," was the reply. "Chris has been taken suddenly ill. I don't know what's the matter with him, but I'm afraid it's something serious. Come right over, Doctor, please."

"I'll be there directly."

The doctor's gray head disappeared, and Chris's father recrossed the road at a bound and entered the house again.

The boy seemed to turn cold all over.

"The genie sick!" he exclaimed. "What can that mean? He is not used to being a boy, and maybe it has disagreed with him. Oh, if I only could see him alone a minute, or get at that lamp!"

But he could not; and he stood trembling from head to foot with cold and apprehension, until he saw Dr. Ingalls enter his father's house.

It was nearly half an hour before the front door opened again, and the physician reappeared, accompanied by Chris's father.

"You don't consider it anything serious?" Mr. Wagstaff asked anxiously.

"I think not," replied the doctor. "I must confess that the case puzzles me somewhat; but I am inclined to believe that Chris will be much better before night."

"Mrs. Wagstaff and I wanted to go to Hartford this morning," said Chris's father; "but I guess we'd better postpone the trip."

"That is not necessary," replied the doctor. "Chris is in no immediate danger; you may as well go if your business is of any importance."

The door was again closed, and Chris was once more alone.

"There's no knowing how long he'll be sick," mused the boy, despairingly. "One thing is certain: he won't go to school, and I may not have a chance to see him to-day. What shall I do? Maybe I'd better go in and tell the whole story. No, I won't do that yet. I'll go back to the barn and wait until father and mother start for the city. Then I'll sneak out and go up to my room and get the

lamp. Then, if I don't make that genie provide me a square meal, my name is n't Chris Wagstaff! I'll have sausages, raspberry jam, and a whole mince-pie."

He returned to the barn, climbed up to his old place in the haymow, and, despite his hunger and excitement, fell asleep.

It was broad daylight when he again awoke. The clock in the kitchen was striking the hour.

"Nine o'clock!" exclaimed Chris, springing

ance by turning a triple somersault, landing on his feet directly in front of the evidently astonished Huldah.

"How 's that?" he asked smilingly.

"Well, I never!" gasped the girl. "Why, I had n't any idea you was so clever, Chris. Why have n't you done these things afore?"

"You never asked me to," replied the genie. "Want me to sing another comic song?" he continued.



"HE ENDED HIS REMARKABLE PERFORMANCE BY TURNING A TRIPLE SOMERSAULT."

up. "I never slept so late before. Whew! I'm hungry! I must have something to eat, and that mighty soon. Now, to get into the house!"

As he was descending the ladder, he heard loud laughter in the voice of Huldah, the maid of all work. Then, "Oh, that 's nothing!" was shouted in the genie's voice—no, in Chris's own.

"What is he up to now?" muttered Chris.

He hurried to the barn door and peeped out.

His position commanded a view of the kitchen window, which was open. Inside the room he saw his counterpart indulging in a series of the most extraordinary antics.

Presently he ended his remarkable perform-

"Why, yes, if you know any more."

"I know more songs than you could shake a stick at. How does the idea of an Irish song and a breakdown strike you?"

The genie proceeded to sing a ditty so excruciatingly funny that Huldah became almost purple in the face from laughter, and even Chris forgot his woes for the time and doubled up with irrepressible merriment.

It was while the genie was dancing the breakdown that the eager boy managed at last to catch his eye.

In energetic pantomime, Chris commanded him to come out to the barn at once. But the

sprightly genie only winked at him, and kept right on with his dance.

"He won't obey!" muttered Chris, in great dismay. "What does that mean? He never behaved that way toward Aladdin."

"Anything more you'd like this morning?" asked the genie, bringing the dance to an end. "Shall I do a few sleight-of-hand tricks?"

"No; I guess you'd better go and leave me to do my work," replied Huldah. "But say, there's one thing I wish you *could* do. When I was in the city, my aunt took me to the theater, and I saw a man walk on the ceiling just like a fly."

"Why, I originated that act," interrupted the genie. "Keep your eye on me."

He gave a spring, and the next moment was walking on the kitchen ceiling, apparently with the utmost ease. Huldah watched him in open-mouthed amazement. When he had dropped gracefully to the floor, she said: "Why, where in the world did you learn to do that?"

"Oh, I know lots of other tricks," answered the genie, evasively. "But I guess I'll go out and take a walk."

"Your ma said you was n't to go outside the house to-day," objected Huldah.

"I'm going, all the same"; and the genie tripped out of the kitchen door, and started in the direction of the barn.

Chris dodged out of sight just in time to escape the notice of the girl. As the genie entered the barn, Chris fiercely slammed the door. Then he said: "Well, here you are at last."

"Here I am," was the smiling response. "I thought I might as well come out and see what you wanted. Fine morning, is n't it?"

Ignoring the polite query, Chris said:

"I'll tell you what I want, mighty quick: I want something to eat."

"Hungry, eh?" said the genie, laconically.

"Yes, I am. And as soon as my breakfast is ready, you can disappear."

"Anything else?" inquired the genie, with an ill-concealed smile.

"That's all at present. Now, please hurry the breakfast. I'll take it right here. Just give me some sausages, scrambled eggs, rolls—"

"One moment," interrupted the genie. "I can't accommodate you."

"What do you mean?" cried Chris.

"Just what I say. I'm no caterer, my young friend."

"B-but you're the slave of the lamp, are n't you?" stammered the astonished Chris in great dismay.

"That's what I am."

"Well, I'm the owner of the lamp, and—"

"I beg your pardon," interrupted the genie, "but you're not."

"I'm not?" shouted Chris.

"You are *not*," repeated the genie, quietly.

"Who is, then?" demanded the boy, hotly.

"Huldah. Now keep quiet a moment and I'll explain. You see, I was sick this morning and your mother went to the closet in your room to get a comfortable to put over me. Behind the big pile of bed-clothing she found the lamp, which I suppose you hid there; and a mighty foolish thing it was for you to do, in *my* opinion. But never mind that. Your mother gave the lamp to Huldah, with permission to do what she pleased with it. That's the whole story."

"But," cried Chris, "don't you see that I am the real owner of the lamp, still? My mother had no right to give it away."

"That's a nice point of law which I do not care to discuss," said the genie, with a bored look. "I recognize Huldah as the owner of the lamp, and that settles the matter."

"But it does n't settle it," exclaimed Chris, angrily. "I bought it and paid for it, and it's mine. I order you to bring me my breakfast."

The genie quietly seated himself on an inverted bushel-basket, humming an air.

"You won't do it?" demanded Chris.

"I certainly shall not," was the response.

"Well, then," cried the boy, in desperation, "will you disappear, or change yourself into somebody else?"

"I can't do it, my boy," replied the genie.

"I'm perfectly well satisfied with my present shape, and I don't propose to change it just now. Do you know?—I rather like your folks. I think I shall get along here first-rate."

"But what will become of me?" demanded Chris, in desperation.

The genie shrugged his shoulders.

"I really don't know," he said. "You'll have to look out for yourself. You got yourself

into the scrape, you 'll have to get yourself out of it. You can't blame *me* for what has happened, you know—if you stop to think of it. I did exactly what you bade me as long as you had possession of the lamp—you can't deny that."

"I don't deny it," said Chris. "But see here, you might do me a little favor."

The genie shook his head.

"Are you utterly heartless?" cried poor Chris, almost sobbing.

"Why, of course I am," laughed the genie; "I 'm heartless, lungless, liverless, boneless. You don't seem to have grasped the idea that I 'm a genie."

"Well, see here," said Chris, after a dismal pause, "if I get the lamp, you 'll be my slave again, won't you?"

"Beyond the shadow of a doubt."

"Then I 'll go and get it now"; and the boy started for the door.

"All right; I 'll go with you," responded the genie, linking his arm with Chris's.

"Why, that won't do," cried the lad, aghast. "Huldah would see us together, and then—"

"That 's just the point," interrupted the genie. "You don't seem to have any sense of humor. Just think how astonished she will be when she sees us coming along, the exact counterparts of each other! What a study her face will be—eh, Chris? Come on!"

But Chris held him back by main force.

"No, no!" he cried. "I would n't have Huldah see us for a hundred dollars."

"Pooh!" sneered the genie, with the utmost disdain, "I 'd give a million or two at any time for a little sport like this. Are n't you coming?"

"No, I am not," replied Chris, emphatically. "Wait a moment," he added appealingly; "I want to ask you a few questions."

"Well, go ahead," said the genie, somewhat impatiently; "what do you want to know?"

"I 'd like to know what was the matter with you this morning when the doctor was called."

The genie laughed heartily. "Nothing, nothing whatever," he said. "I was playing sick."

"Playing sick? What for?"

"Why, because I did n't want to go to school this morning. I got the idea from the boy who sat next me yesterday; I forget his name."

"Scotty Jones?" suggested Chris.

"That 's the fellow. I told him I considered the whole business an awful bore, and he advised me to make believe that I was sick this morning. As you know, I did so. I pretended to have a frightful cold. You ought to have seen me. You know I have facilities for that sort of thing which you do not possess. My face was swollen so badly that I could hardly open my eyes, and I could scarcely speak. Your father and mother were very much frightened, I can tell you."

"What was the use of getting them up so early?" said Chris. "Why did n't you wait till seven or eight o'clock?"

"I did n't know that was the proper thing to do. You see, I never was a school-boy before in my life. But it turned out all right."

"You 're sure you did n't give Scotty a hint," began Chris, anxiously.

"That I was a genie? Oh, no, I 'm too sharp for that. I 'm not that kind of a genie. At that time I was working in your interests, and of course I would n't say anything that might compromise you. Nor do your father and mother suspect anything yet. While on the subject, I must say that they and the doctor did all they could to make me easy. They left me tucked up in bed very comfortably; and I should probably be there now if Huldah had n't rubbed the lamp."

"Oh, *that 's* how you happened to be in the kitchen, is it?" cried the boy.

"Of course it is."

"You did n't tell her that you were a genie, did you?" asked Chris.

"No, I believe I did n't; though there 's no particular reason why I should not have done so. I only asked her what she wanted, and she said nothing in particular, but that she thought South Dusenbury was an awful slow place, and she wished a circus would come to town. I replied that I was a whole circus myself, and offered to prove it. The rest you know."

"Well, don't tell her what you are, will you?" pleaded Chris. "Don't tell her just yet, anyhow. I 'm sure to have the lamp again pretty soon, and then it would be very awkward if she knew."

"I can't help that," said the genie. "I—but hold on! she 's rubbing the old lamp now." The next moment he had disappeared.

(To be continued.)

THE MARTYRDOM OF A POET.

BY MARION HILL.

REX stood at the foot of the stairway and scowled up that innocent vista. "Who has the ink?" he shouted, in a high, aggrieved tone.

"Madge," answered that young woman herself. Her voice came from above—from her own room, probably.

The scowl which deepened on Rex's face was not an ill-tempered frown; it was merely the Dunbar wrinkle of earnestness, and showed on all their young foreheads. It was particularly noticeable on Rex's handsome face, for he was the most earnest of the four of them. Rex, by the by, would have been astounded at hearing himself called handsome, for he had red hair, and thought that circumstance "did for him," to use his own lugubrious phrase.

"Please let me have the ink," he called again, after a fruitless pause.

"What do you want it for?" asked Madge, unrelentingly.

"To do my Latin."

"It is ridiculous to think that it is 'the ink'; it is as bad as to have to ask for 'the needle,' or 'the tooth-brush,' or 'the hair-pin.' It is a shame not to have two bottles," came floating down-stairs in Madge's most precise utterance.

"It is; it's a howling sin. But hand over the fluid, please."

"I can't; I'm using it."

"You always are, lately. What do you do with it, pray? Drink it?"

Rex bounded up-stairs. Madge, wise in experience, flew to her door and succeeded in locking it in his face; so he took the only satisfaction in his power—the illogical one of bestowing a few useless thumps on the panels.

Madge ironically murmured, "Come in."

"Oh, I'll get even," said Rex, cheerfully.

"Do."

"When I get your precious ink, I'll take care that you don't get it again in a hurry. I'll hide it; I'll sleep on it; I'll put it—"

"On your hair, where it is needed," finished Madge.

"I'll pay you for that, too," announced Rex, departing down the passage.

In his own room he found an interloper, his brother Benny, a small, small youth just out of baby dresses. Knitting his brows and putting forth strength, Rex seized this inoffensive party by his numerous waistbands and lifted him in the air and held him there rigidly, while Benny shrieked with mirth and agony, and twisted, and howled, and suffered, and enjoyed himself awesomely until lowered safely to the floor by this strong, big brother who always came home just at this hour from some mysterious place called "High School."

"Hullo, Wex," panted Benny, at the conclusion of this ceremony.

"Hullo. What have you been doing with yourself all day?"

"Putting flowers on 'Bingo's' gwave." Bingo was Madge's much-loved kitten, which had died a week ago.

"Good boy. Where's mother?"

"In her sewin'-machin'," was the lucid reply.

Rex strolled into the sewing-room, and chatted a few minutes, entertaining his mother with school anecdotes. He was an undemonstrative boy, and would rather be thrashed than be caught kissing any of his family; but he was of an affectionate nature, and these afternoon chats were regular institutions.

After sitting on a half-made dress, and messing up some spools, and spouting machine-oil out of the can, Rex wandered away down-stairs to find something to eat, as if he were a boy of ten instead of a young man of sixteen.

He found his younger sister helping herself to cake out of the dining-room cupboard.

"Aha! caught you stealing!" he cried, noting with deep pleasure that she jumped at least a foot.

"I'm not," wailed Carrie; "mother told me I might."

For safety she crammed as much as she could into her mouth, and then made cautious efforts to get the table between herself and Rex. In her interviews with that young man



"WHO HAS THE INK?" REX SHOUTED.

she never felt secure unless behind some bulwark. Madge was too old for him to inflict bodily injury upon her, and Benny was too young, but she, unfortunately, was just right, as her every aching bone and muscle could testify.

"Hast thou some ink, Carolina?" he inquired, making a futile snatch at her long braid of hair as she hurried past.

"Ink?" she echoed, though the word sounded like "Ok?" so full was her mouth.

"Ink, damsel. The fair Margaret useth the family consignment, and I crave some, crav- ingly."

"I'll lend you my stylographic pen."

"I thank thee."

She presented him the pen, in a defensive attitude, with elbow raised; for Rex's requests

were generally lures to bring her within clutching-distance, and never more so than when his phrasing was dramatic. But he peaceably accepted the loan, and set to work upon his translation.

Carrie sat companionably on the edge of the table, and watched him. Terror must have its charms, for she was always hovering near him even when black and blue from his attentions.

"Is Latin hard?" she asked amiably.

"Not hard enough to crack nuts on, nor soft enough to sit on." To compose this reply, he rested from his labor and held his pen in suspension, so that a blob of ink oozed dejectedly from the point and splashed upon the exercise.

"Thunder," he remarked mildly. He contended that this objectionable expletive was harmless if uttered non-explosively, and he set to work again with a conscience void of offense.

"Have you seen poor little Bingo's grave since we fixed it?" asked Carrie, sinking her voice to the apologetic hoarseness of those who tread upon the skirts of grief.

"That pleasure is in reserve," said Rex, adding a placid "thunder" as a second blob fell:

"Will you have to write that over?" asked Carrie.

"Looks like it," said Rex, thoughtfully viewing his work, and inanely holding his pen so that a third disfigurement dripped from the generous instrument.

"Thunder three times," announced Rex, laying down his weapon. "If the recording angel would only employ a stylographic pen, he would n't have to use his tears to blot out his entries. I will ascend the stairs and see if oh-rare-pale-Margaret is ready to relinquish her grip on the family bottle."

He found the once-locked door open, and Madge sitting pensively at her window.

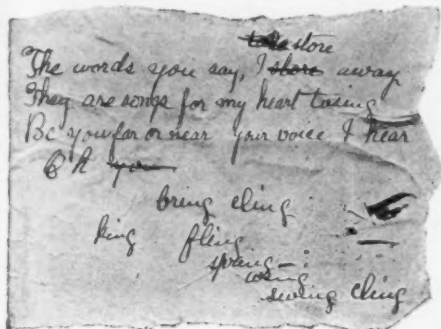
"Done with this?" he asked sarcastically, with his hand on the bottle.

"Quite," replied Madge.

As was his invariable custom, he accidentally spilled some drops, and seized a crumpled wad of paper from Madge's waste-basket to sop them up, carrying the paper with him in case of further mishaps.

When he reentered the dining-room he found it deserted, and he worked at his translation

uninterruptedly. It was nearly dinner-time when he finished. Before clearing away his books, he sat for a few minutes in lazy content, and unconsciously smoothed out the scrap of paper he had brought from Madge's room, and read what was written thereon. The inscription was so cabalistic that he read it again and again, and finally set himself to a downright study of it. What he saw was—



The more he puzzled over it, the less he made of it. Madge's writing, surely, but what had she gone off on a string of *ings* for? Unless—why, to be sure!—Miss Sentimental had taken to writing poetry! Evidently love-poetry, too! The various rhymes to “sing” she had arranged in a group for convenience. Rex smiled a broad smile, and blessed the kind fate which had placed this means of torture in his hands. If he could get hold of some completed “poems,” it would be a grand idea to memorize them; a time would surely arrive when he could repeat them with stirring effect. The plot was too good a one to give up, and, anyhow, he had a score to settle with Madge at once; so, with delight in his heart, he sped up-stairs to ransack Madge's desk. He lifted the lid, but had no time to choose, for he heard Madge's step approaching; so, appropriating a random handful of papers, and stuffing them into his pocket, he escaped from the room.

“What were you doing there?” she asked, coming suddenly upon him.

“Avenging my wrongs,” he replied enigmatically.

The dinner-bell rang just then, and he gave it prompt obedience by flinging himself upon

the balusters, and thereby reaching the lower floor in the shortest possible time.

After dinner the Dunbars, who were a sociable family, all gathered in the sitting-room and entertained one another, and themselves, with books, or games, or conversation. Benny, of course, was not a member of this charmed circle, he being in the land of dreams.

Pretty Madge, who had artistic aspirations, drew out her paints and worked upon a picture. Rex hung over her chair, manifesting a fiend's interest in her sketch, criticizing, advising, exhorting, and extravagantly commending, till she lost all heart, and said indignantly:

“Oh, Rex, do go away and leave me alone! No one can stand such persecution. It would not be a wonder if I never turned out to be anything, so disheartening is your teasing!”

“‘Turn out’! What an expression for a young lady of culture! You ‘turn out’ a team, or you ‘turn out’ your toes, miss; but you ‘develop into’ a poet—if you are lucky!”

Madge looked up at him in sudden consternation. Rex returned the gaze with interest, and murmured dreamily, “Cling, wing, sing, ring-a-ching-ching, ting-a-ling.”

“Oh, Rex!” cried Madge, starting to her feet and clasping her hands in agony.

“Ladies and gentlemen,” began Rex, backing into the center of the room, and drawing some papers from his pocket, “it gives me great pleasure to introduce to the reading public the verses of the talented young author Miss Margaret Dunbar.”

“Rex, give them to me!” shrieked Madge, grasping vainly at her precious papers, and throwing herself upon her tormentor. Rex found an unexpected ally in Carrie, who clung to her suffering sister, and shrilly piped:

“I'll hold her for you, Rexie; go on!”

“What have we here?” continued Rex, examining the topmost sheet. “I must state that I myself have never before had the pleasure of hearing these gems of literature, and must confess to being all agog. Let me read you the first which reveals itself to my gaze. It is entitled ‘What More?’”

“Oh, father, stop him! Mother, stop him!” begged Madge, writhing in Carrie's coils.

“Stop what, dear?” asked Mrs. Dunbar, to

whom this excitement was but a sample of the hourly, harmless scrimmages indulged in by her lively brood.

"No interruptions," hastily said Rex, reading in a great hurry, and with a burlesque tone of sorrow:

WHAT MORE?

To dream and see the dead,
To wake and wish you dreamed;
To sift a friend and find that he
Was not the friend he seemed;
To smile, and bleed at heart;
To weep, and find it bliss,—
On those sad days when hope falls dead,
What more seems life than this?



"'NO INTERRUPTIONS,' SAID REX, READING IN A GREAT HURRY, AND WITH A BURLESQUE TONE OF SORROW."

"Give me the rest, Rex, I beg of you," implored Madge, her face scarlet with the ordeal; yet she felt an odd thrill of satisfaction, too, in hearing her verses fall from other lips.

"The second effusion," continued Rex, unmoved, "is harrowing in its pathos. Allow me:

LINES TO MY DEAD KITTEN.

I PRESS my face against your form,
I say good-by, my dear;
My tears fall on your snowy coat,—
Do you neither see nor hear?
Only a cat, a soulless cat!
Ah, let those chide who will,
I mourn unshamed o'er my little friend
So strangely cold and still.

Carrie contritely relaxed her hold, and hied herself to the sofa. "Poor little 'Bingo-bingo'! Seems 's if I can see her now," she sobbed. Carrie was always an impressionable young person, and shed tears with frightful ease.

"Too long," said Rex, critically. "I flatter myself I could be briefer:

Little cat, little
cat,
Now defunct,
where are
you at?

Mere hysteria wrung from Carrie a strangling snort of amusement, and Rex resumed jubilantly:

"This third selection bids fair to be flattering, for it seems to be addressed to me."

Having tried physical force in vain, Madge here tried to appeal to Rex's soul, — and failed.

"Dear Rex," she said earnestly, "if you read *that*, I will never forgive you."

"Dear Madge," echoed Rex, just as earnestly, "if I should lay it aside unread after seeing its alluring title, I should never forgive myself.

REX, MY KING.

A CROWN you wear on your sunny hair—
The royal crown of youth;
And a jewel lies in your steadfast eyes,
Those turquoise wells of truth.
Not a word you say but I store away,
As a song for my heart to sing.
Be you far or near, your voice I hear,
Oh, Rex, my brother, my king!

"This does n't seem to me as funny as I thought it," mumbled Rex, flushing guiltily. "Here, Madge, take your old poems! Who wants them!"

Madge eagerly took the offered papers, but Carrie, failing to see that the humor had gone out of the thing, made a clever grab, secured them, and skipped across the room, where she stood dancing in monkeyish enjoyment at having a hand in the game, while she read in a clear gabble:

You need not roam from your childhood's home,
A kingdom to seek or subdue;
For we who dwell 'neath your loving spell,
Are your subjects loyal and true.
And your kingdom, dear, you can find it here,
Without any wandering;
So, I pray you, deign in our hearts to reign,
Oh, Rex, my brother, my king!

"That's enough of that!" commanded Rex, angrily. He was honestly contrite at having laid bare Madge's innocent affection for himself.

"No, it is n't," said Carrie, obtusely; "there's another verse.

We cannot confess all our tenderness
In this practical world of ours;
And my soul I shrine, O brother mine,
As a violet shrines its flowers.
No fear have I that you'll ever pry
Through these lines where my heart I fling;
And you'll never know that I loved you so,
O Rex, my brother, my king!

Rather an awkward pause fell for a moment upon the family, as they recognized that Rex and Carrie, between them, had been bawling out Madge's sacred little secrets. Madge herself, trembling with indignation, rose from her chair, and said bitterly:

"I hope you are all satisfied." Then she burst into tears and left the room.

Rex did not quite know what to do. He looked askance at his father and mother, and felt abused because they had so solemn an air.

Then he glanced accidentally at Carrie, and felt like choking her. The grinning little ninny! What business had she to be amused? Finally, he stuck his hands in his pockets and stalked out of the room, not to find Madge—oh, no!—but he noticed that she was n't in the parlor, nor the library, nor the music-room, nor in any of the bedrooms. There was only the cheerless play-room left.

"Madge, are you there?" he asked, putting his head into the darkness. There was no answer; but the silence proved nothing, so he began to explore the apartment. He went about it, after the fashion of most people in the dark, with his eyes tightly shut and his arms waving wildly around. After a slow progress, he was rewarded by stumbling over a small foot which drew itself out of his path. He stood in abject silence for a while.

"Madge, I'm sorry," he said at last.

"Go away," came in a strangled whisper.

"Will you forgive me, Madge?" he asked.

"Go away, I tell you!"

"I'll never go to your desk again, Madge, truly."

"It's too late now." At the recollection of her wrongs, she broke into a fresh gush of tears. Then she experienced the surprise of her life. Rex, the hard-hearted, the unsentimental, knelt down beside her in the darkness, and took her hand. His voice, too, was astonishingly husky as he said:

"Won't you please stop crying? Don't you think I feel mean enough without that? I did n't know a fellow *could* feel so mean at finding out that his sister loved him. But—but—it *won't hurt me to know it, Madge!*"

She felt a soft kiss laid upon her cheek! What next! Why, *next*, Madge had an odd sense of being herself the culprit. What had he done so very wrong? She mentally reviewed the whole occurrence, and in spite of herself she discovered a ludicrous side to the tragedy.

"Get up," she said briefly.

"Am I forgiven?"

"I suppose so."

"Quite?"

"Quite;—right, smite, tight, blight," she said, giving way to uncontrollable mirth.

And peace was restored.



The Fool's Christmas

by Florence May Alt

ON Christmas eve, the king, disconsolate,
Weary with all the round of pomp and state,
Gave whisper to his fool: "A merry way
Have I bethought to spend our holiday.
Thou shalt be king, and I the fool will be—
And thou shalt rule the court in drollery
For one short day!" With caper, nod, and grin,
Full saucily replied the harlequin:
"A merry play; and, sire, amazing strange
For one of us to suffer such a change!
But thou? Why, all the kings of earth," said he,
"Have played the fool, and played it skilfully!"
Then the king's laugh stirred all the arras dim,
Till courtiers wondered at his humor grim.

And so it chanced, when wintry sunbeams shone
From Christmas skies, lo! perched upon the throne
Sat Lionel the Fool, in purple drest,
The royal jewels blazing on his breast.

On Christmas morning, too, the king arose,
And donned, with sense of ease, the silken hose
Of blue and scarlet; then the doublet red
With azure slashed; upon his kingly head,
That wearied oft beneath a jeweled crown,
He drew the jingling hood, and tied it down.
All day he crouched amid the chill and gloom—
None seeking him—within the turret room.
But when calm night with starry lamps came down
Her purple stairs, he crept forth to the town.



"'WE HAVE NOT MUCH TO GIVE, DEAR FOOL,' THEY SAID,
'BUT THOU ART COLD; COME SHARE OUR FIRE AND BREAD!'"

His scanty cape about his shoulders blew,
 Close to his face the screening hood he drew.
 He knocked first at a cottage of the poor,
 And lo! flew open wide the ready door.
 "We have not much to give, dear fool," they said,
 "But thou art cold; come share our fire and bread!"
 With willing hands they freed his cape from snow,
 And warmed and cheered him ere they let him go.

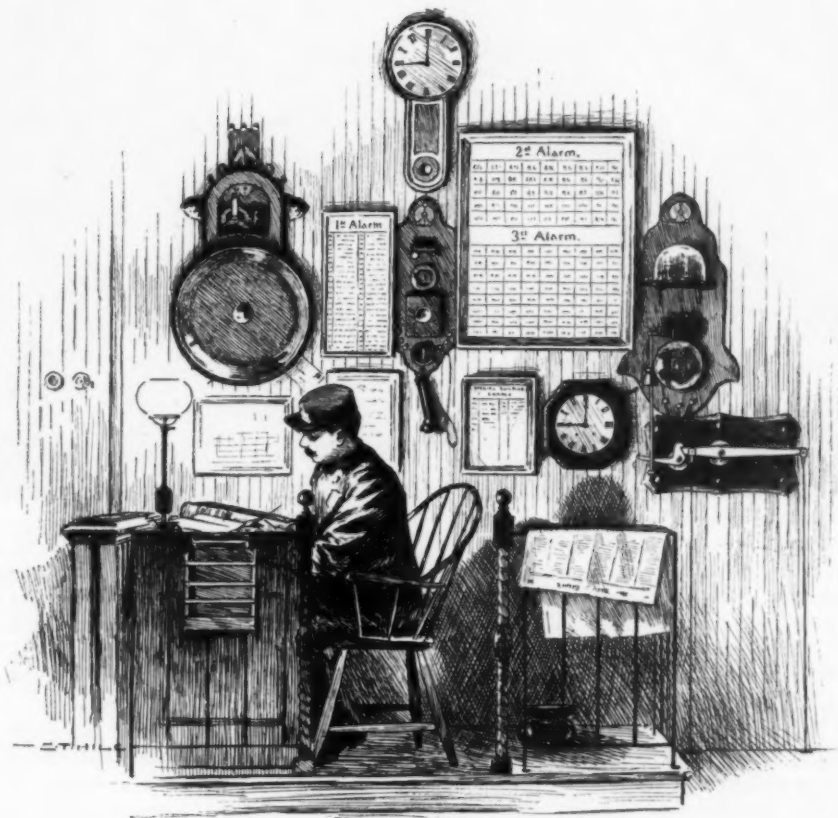
And so 't was ever. By the firelight dim
 Of many a hearthstone poor they welcomed him;
 And children who would shun the king in awe,
 Would scamper to the doorway if they saw
 The scarlet peak of Lionel's red hood.
 "Dear fool," they called him loudly, "thou wert good
 To bring the frosted cake! Come in and see
 Our little Lisbeth—hark! she calls for thee!"

And so 't was ever. On his way the king
 With softened heart saw many a grievous thing:
 But love he found, and charity. And when
 He crept at dawn through palace gates again,
 He knew that he who rules by fear alone
 May sit securely on his dreaded throne:
 But he who rules by love shall find it true
 That love, the milder power, is mightier, too.
 "Dear fool," he said, "thou art a king, in sooth:
 The king of hearts! To-day no farce, but truth!
 For I have seen that thou, beneath my rule,
 Hast often played the king,—and I the fool!"



FIGHTING A FIRE.

By C. T. HILL.



THE "HOUSE-WATCHMAN" AND THE GONGS.

NEAR the door of every engine-house there is a railed-off space, at the end of which stands a small desk with a gas-jet beside it. On the desk are some large books—the roll of the company, the "blotter," or record of the fires the company has taken part in extinguishing, and other journals containing various memoranda in connection with the working of the department. At the desk sits a fireman, reading a paper, perhaps, or maybe putting down in one of the

books the record of some fellow-fireman who has just gone "off duty" for a short while, first having obtained the permission of the company's captain. Near by, somewhere on the apparatus-floor, possibly another fireman may be found cleaning out the stalls of the horses, or keeping bright the metal-work on the "swinging-harness," but ready in an instant to assist in hitching up the horses should a "call," or an alarm, come ringing out from the array



"HITCHING UP."

of instruments ranged along the wall near the desk.

The man sitting at the desk is the "man on watch," or "house-watchman," as he is called. One is on duty all the time, alternating with other members of the company, the day's length being divided into five watches, as follows: from 8 A. M. till 1 P. M.; from 1 till 6 P. M.; from 6 P. M. till 12 midnight; from 12 M. till 6 A. M.; and from 6 till 8 A. M. (the "dog-watch"). Two men are on watch at the "last watch," or that one from 12 midnight till 6 A. M., to facilitate the hitching up of the horses, the rest of the company being in bed.

Let us look at the various instruments for receiving the alarm. They are not many, and are very interesting. I shall describe them without using any technicalities, for the very good reason that I don't know anything about them technically, but can explain them only as they were explained to me by a fireman.

First, at the lower right-hand side, on a black walnut base-board, is placed the instrument offi-

cially called the "combination," and by the fireman termed the "joker." Why "joker" I do not know; but it is probably called the "combination" because it combines both the bell for receiving the alarm, and the "trip," or device for mechanically releasing the horses, which I shall describe further on.

This is the first bell to ring the alarm, or number of the station whence the alarm is sent; but before it rings there is a slight "click" heard in the Morse instrument placed above it. This might be called a "warning bell," and by the ordinary listener would not be noticed at all; but to the quick ear of the man on watch, and the equally well-trained ears of the horses, there needs no second stroke to tell them that an alarm will follow. This "click" is caused by the opening of the electric circuit in which the station is situated.

Beside the combination-bell, or "joker," there is a small weight that slides up and down a brass rod. It is held in place at the top by a catch connected with the hammer of the bell;

and, as this hammer draws back to make the first stroke of the alarm, it releases this weight, and the weight slides down the rod. Being attached by a little chain to a lever projecting from the side of a clock hanging beside it, the weight, as it falls, pulls this lever down and stops the clock, thus showing at what instant the alarm was received.

At the bottom of the rod there is a very large lever set with a trigger-like catch, and connected by certain mechanism underneath the floor with the stalls of the horses. The same falling weight strikes this trigger, also, and releases the lever, and the lever in turn releases the horses.

Above the combination is placed a Morse instrument, sounder and key, and beside it a telephone, to communicate with headquarters or with other companies, and also a few frames containing a list of stations that particular company goes to, on receiving the first, second, or third alarms.

At the other side, nearly over the desk, is placed the big gong, twelve or fifteen inches in diameter, and very loud-sounding. This begins to strike about when the smaller one gets through; and should the man on watch have failed to count the number of the station on the "joker," he will have no difficulty in getting the number from the big gong, for it strikes

slowly,—that is, slowly in comparison with the "joker," which rings the number out very fast. The large gong is very loud, and can be heard a block away. The company receives four rounds on the small bell and two on the big bell; or, more correctly speaking, the number of the station is rung four times on the "joker" and twice on the big gong. But it is rarely that the firemen have to wait to get the signal from the latter, for before the small bell has rattled off its four rounds the engine has rolled out of the house and they are on the way to the fire.

A light is burning brightly beside the desk; inside the railed inclosure a fireman sits reading a newspaper, and with one hand shades his eyes from the bright glare of the gas-jet in front of him. Maybe he is dozing; but if he is taking a quiet nap, he is sleeping as General Grant did on the eve of battle—with one eye open. In the rear of one of the stalls another fireman, pitchfork in hand, is shaking up and arranging the hay that forms the bed for the horses. A few passers-by stop for a moment to look in through the partly open doorway at the spick-and-span apparatus always in such perfect order: the harness swinging evenly over the pole of the engine, the end of which, butted with brass, shines like polished gold. Already some of the horses are down on their haunches nibbling at a bit of hay, and preparing to go to



"ROLLING TO THE FIRE."—AT FULL SPEED.

sleep. The telegraph-instruments at the side keep up an endless clicking and tingling, and but for these sounds all would be very quiet. Overhead, in the "bunk-room," or dormitory, the men are preparing to "turn in," but a few, in one corner, lingering to watch the result of an exciting game of checkers between two recognized "champions" of the company.



"STRETCHING IN."

Click!—one stroke on the instrument, followed by a quick "*tang-tang-tang*"—a pause, "*tang-tang*" on the "joker"—the man at the desk springs to his feet and shouts "Get up!"—

the weight has fallen, the lever flies up, the horses are released. They need no command, but are on their feet even before the fireman calls, and rattle out of their stalls and under the swinging-harness. *Snap, snap!* go the collars about their necks, and then the "bit-snaps" are locked at each side in an instant. *Thud, thud!* come the men, sliding down the poles at both

sides of the house, and striking the rubber pads placed below. Bounding from there to the floor, they climb to their various places upon the apparatus.

The driver has jumped to his seat on the engine and snaps in place the belt that secures him there; the engineer, and maybe the foreman also, spring on the engine; and the engineer with one foot shoves down a lever in the floor that shuts off connection with a boiler in the basement. This boiler always keeps up about ten or twelve pounds of steam-pressure in the engine. The engineer snatches up a lump of oil-soaked waste, lights it, and throws it in the furnace of the engine, amid the wood piled there; the driver leans forward, and, taking up the reins, gives a slight pull toward him. This pull releases a catch in the iron framework that holds up the harness, and this frame flies up

to the ceiling, letting the harness fall on the backs of the horses.

The man on watch shouts to the driver the number of the station and its locality, the

big doors slide open—and the engine dashes off to the fire!

The same manœuvres have been going on behind the engine, where the "tender," or hose-carriage, is hitching up, and it is after the engine as fast as the horses can fly.

I have leave to jump on and go with them. *Rattley-bang* we pound over the cobbles, and then—with a *bump!*—we go over the flagging at the crossing—*swish!* around the corner with a turn so quick it makes my hair stand on end, and we "straighten out" for a run along the avenue.

We are now in the wake of the engine, in a cloud of smoke and cinders pouring from the top of the latter, and we are gaining every second. The lamp-posts—the shop-windows—the crowds of shouting people—pass back of us like a quickly flying panorama. The horses seem fairly to fly. Around this wagon we swing, then pull up for another until a half-frightened driver can turn his startled horse out of our way, and then we put on a burst of speed to make up for the delay.

I tell you, it takes a cool head and a quick eye to drive a pair of fire-horses.

We are quickly almost up with the engine, for our horses have less weight to pull, and soon we have no difficulty in passing it, which we do with a shout. Now we are nearing the fire, the men beside me are leisurely pulling on their rubber coats and putting on their fire-hats, and I—well, I am holding on for dear life, expecting every moment to be thrown off behind in a heap. Not that I am afraid—oh, no!—but you see, I am the "thirteenth" member of the company (so every friend, or hanger-on, of a company is called, there being twelve regular members—a foreman, an assistant foreman, and ten men), and I have to take very good care of myself in consequence, for that is considered an unlucky number to bear; and if anything happens, it may happen to me.

A big cloud of black smoke, a group of excited people, a policeman running toward us, indicate the location of the fire. A fireman jumps from the tender, and, running ahead of us, looks for the nearest hydrant. About eighteen or twenty feet of the hose has been run off the reel, and a man stands with it in hand ready to



"OPENING UP."

throw it to the man at the hydrant. Another tender has turned the corner ahead, and is making with breakneck speed for the same pump. Can we reach it first?

Our driver leans forward and urges the horses onward, giving them full rein, and they jump through the air, pulling the tender along with great jerks. We near the hydrant; our man stands there ready, waving his wrench in the air and shouting to us. The other tender is advancing with frightful rapidity, but they are just a *little* too late!

We fly past the hydrant, the hose is thrown to our man, he takes a turn about the pump, and we "stretch in" to the fire. This gives us "first water," as it is called, and the foreman of our company takes precedence of the foremen of all other companies on account of being the first to arrive, and has "charge of the fire" until a battalion-chief arrives, when the foreman turns the command over to him.

Our engine follows us quickly, and, dashing up to the hydrant, the hydrant-connection is unshipped from its place in the long tubes that hang over the wheels on both sides of the boiler, and is fastened to the hydrant and then to the pump of the engine. The hose, taken around to the other side of the engine, is rapidly screwed to the pump, and we, having pulled up in front of the fire, hastily roll off from the reel the number of lengths of hose needed; a nozzle is placed at the end, and we are all ready when the order is passed to the engineer to "start the water."

It is a cellar fire,—a bad one,—and in a factory. Clouds of dense black smoke pour up from the basement and out of every crevice around the big folding doors that form the entrance. Bits of falling glass tell us that the pressure of smoke and of the gas generated by the combustion going on within the building is beginning to break the windows in the upper part, and if we are not active the flames will get the better of us. Our foreman is everywhere at once, directing the captains of the arriving companies to their different positions.

Two more tenders have rolled up and deposited their complement of hose ready to be manned and directed against the fire. A "truck," or hook-and-ladder company, thunders upon the scene, with its load of heavy ladders and firemen's implements, weighing over four tons. Dropping from it as it slows up, men come running over to our aid armed with axes and hooks, ready to make an opening in the building so that we may get at the seat of the fire.

The watchman of the factory cannot be found. Our foreman shouts, "Quick! the battering-ram. Break open the big doors!"

One is quickly unshipped from its place underneath the truck, and, with a man on each side, at the command of the captain the ram is lunged forward at the big doors. Crash!—the

doors quiver under the impact of the combined weight of the solid mass of iron and the two heavy men. A few more blows and the locks give way, the doors fly open, and into the black, stifling smoke we force our way, dragging the heavy hose with us.

We can see no fire,—nothing but thick, dense smoke choking our throats, and making the water run from our eyes in streams. Meanwhile the men from the truck-company have been at work with the butt-ends of their axes, and have broken open the dead-lights and grating in the front over the basement and the basement doors. The fire having shown up there, we are ordered to "back out" and "work in" the basement—an order easily given, but not so easily obeyed; for the smoke is now thick and so stifling that people in the crowd on the other side of the street are obliged to beat a quick retreat before it. But we firemen are there to obey commands, not to question them, and down we go.

A shower of glass greets us as we back out, for it is now raining glass and bits of the window-frames from above. Ladders having been raised to the upper floors, the truckmen are making an opening for the pipemen of other companies, that they may be on hand should the fire get above the first floor. Another shower, this time of red-hot plaster, greets us as we work our way into the basement; and the fire, now spreading all over the ceiling, brings more down around us. The heat is frightful there, and we turn our fire-hats back foremost to protect our faces as best we can. We slash the water around, knocking over burning beams and piles of packing-boxes, the hose squirming and quivering under the pressure of the tons of water being forced through it every minute: the united strength of three or four men is required to control it. All at once one of our number gives a gasp and tumbles down at our feet, face forward, in a pool of dirty water and plaster, overcome by the smoke and heat. Another drops his hold upon the hose and stoops to assist his fallen comrade. It is now red hot in the basement, and we cannot breathe much longer. If we do not back out soon, it will be all over with us; but firemen, in the enthusiasm and excitement of the moment, hate



A NEW YORK FIRE.



THE BATTALION-CHIEF ARRIVES AND TAKES COMMAND.

to retreat until actually driven out, so we still hold our position. At last we cannot stand it, and we retreat to the doorway.

The fireman who was overcome, assisted by one or more companions, reaches the foot of the stairs. A battalion-chief in command on the pavement above, seeing our position, shouts, "Here! A man hurt! Down in the basement!" In a second a dozen brave fellows dash down the steps, and, lifting up our injured comrade, carry him tenderly up to the street, and then over to one of the patrol-wagons, where, with plenty of fresh air and brisk rubbing, he is soon brought to his senses.

The chief follows the men down the stairway, and, giving one look at the blazing cellar, says, "This is too hot for you; back out, quick!" We need no second command, but get up the stairway as fast as we can. As we reach the foot of the stairs in our retreat, *crash!* comes the floor down where we have been standing, and our place is taken by a packed-in mass

of blazing timbers. A few seconds later, and we might have been under that mass.

The water is now all directed at this point, and the fire is slowly conquered. It has reached the first and second floors by way of the stairways and elevator-openings, and the men placed there to receive it, though having a hard tussle, are gradually getting the best of it. Our foreman, on the arrival of the first battalion-chief, has turned the command over to him, and he has sent out additional alarms, second and third, and we now have massed about the fire twelve engine-companies, four truck-companies, about four chiefs, a deputy chief superintendent, a chief superintendent (the head of the department), and two sections of the Insurance Patrol. The Patrol men have covered up the office furniture in the front office with their tarpaulins, and are ready to save additional property should the fire spread. There are also a water-tower (as yet not in use), and a fuel-wagon dashing here and there

among the engines, to supply them with coal. In all there are about two hundred men at work.

Companies have been sent to the rear to work in from the next street; "rollers" (a device used on the roofs or cornices of houses to protect the hose when it is pulled up from the street, and to prevent cutting it) have been placed on adjoining houses, and lines of hose have been run up there to fight the fire from that point. Men from the truck-companies are working on the roof, cutting it open that the smoke and gases may escape and better air come to the men working within the building; "cellar-pipes" are brought into play to pour streams of water along the ceiling of the cellar. Even in the house adjoining the one on fire, men with a battering-ram are at work breaking a hole through the foundation-wall, so that streams of water may be directed at the fire from that point, to drown it out.

Soon we have the satisfaction of seeing the last squirming flame flicker and go out before

the deluge of water being poured on it from all points, and nothing but a hissing, smoldering mass is left. The ruin is thoroughly soaked and washed down before the tired firemen are ordered to "shut off."

The extra companies sent for by the last two alarms are now ordered home, and the dark street is full of men in long rubber-coats carrying lanterns. They go about amid the twisted labyrinth of hose, "disconnecting" or unscrewing the different sections of hose, that the water may drain from them before they are "taken up" and rolled upon the reel of the tender.

Being the first company to arrive, we are the last to leave, and we remain until with men from the truck-company we thoroughly go over the building from top to bottom, tearing down door-jambs, window-casings, and pulling up parts of the floor—"overhauling," as it is called, that no unseen spark may be left smoldering to break out anew after we have left; for the battalion-chief under whose com-



"TAKING UP."



"HITTING THE FIRE."

mand we are now working is responsible for the fire, and should it start up again it would go hard with him before the commissioners, by whom he would be called to account.

Soon we, too, are "disconnecting," and when the different sections of hose have been hauled up behind the tender, we screw them together again and they are wound upon the reel, being

pulled taut over the iron roller at the back part as they are reeled in. This thoroughly squeezes out all the remaining water from them, and winds the hose evenly on the reel.

We are now rolling home, dirty, begrimed, and partly soaked, and followed by a crowd of boys about a mile long. When we reach the engine-house, we take off from the reel all the lengths of hose we have used, including three or four additional lengths, to make sure of getting every length that contains any water. The wet lengths are hung up to dry in a long shaft in the engine-house called the "hose-tower," while new, dry hose takes their places. Water left in the hose causes a mildew that rots and destroys it very quickly.

We wash down the engine and tender; a new fire is made ready in the furnace of the former; the horses are put back in their stalls, and, after the engine and tender have been rolled back to their respective places on the floor, they are brought out under the iron framework and the swinging-harness is hoisted into place again. The clock is started once more and set right; the weight is again placed at the top of the sliding-rod; the lever or "trip" at the bottom is set, and the horses are fastened in their stalls.

Then the captain steps up to the telegraph-instrument, and, clicking off a few clicks, informs headquarters that he is "at home" once more, and ready to receive another "call."



THE BABY'S CHRISTMAS DREAM.



JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.

As you all know right well, my friends, your Jack is not a summer Jack-in-the-pulpit; neither does he belong to winter, autumn, or spring. He is an outdoor-loving, all-the-year Jack, at your service, thriving in the sunlight of young lives, and blooming best in the warmth and merriment of young hearts. Therefore is he specially alive in December, the last month of the twelve, and the cheeriest, for it sets the Christmas bells a-ringing and brings in the glow of Christmas-tide.

And this reminds me of a little song sent to this pulpit by Emilie Poulsson, in the desire that you learn it by heart, and in time for the coming day:

WHILE stars of Christmas shine,
Lighting the skies,
Let only loving looks
Beam from your eyes.

While bells of Christmas ring
Joyous and clear,
Speak only happy words,
All mirth and cheer.

Give only loving gifts,
And in love take;
Gladden the poor and sad
For love's dear sake.

SWIFT TRAVELERS.

DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: Not very long ago you told your ST. NICHOLAS hearers of hawks being able to fly at the rate of 150 miles an hour. Here are some interesting facts concerning the traveling powers of certain other birds.

The paisano, road-runner, or chaparral cock runs faster than a fleet horse.

The ostrich sometimes runs at the rate of 30 miles an hour.

The carrier-pigeon will fly at least 30 miles an hour, and some have been known to travel at the rate of 60 or even 90 miles an hour.

Wild pigeons often fly hundreds of miles a day to feed, returning to their roosts at night. Audubon says they travel a mile a minute.

The condor of the Andes flies to the height of six miles.

The bald eagle rises in circular sweeps until it disappears from view, and then glides to the earth with such velocity that the eye can scarcely follow it.

The humming-bird, although the smallest bird known, possesses great power and rapidity of flight, and travels many miles in one day.

Yours truly, B. L. B—.

HERE is a message from the Red School-house:

DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: A young girl only thirteen years of age has sent me these very clever nonsense rhymes,—her own unaided work, she says,—and so, dear Jack, without ado I'll hand them to your "chicks" and you.

Very truly your
LITTLE SCHOOLMA'AM.

THE "BUGABOO."

Now heed my tale, so strange and true:
The good ship called the "Bugaboo"
Sailed forth one day from Timbuctoo.
Of men it had a goodly crew,
A captain and a boatswain too.
Of passengers there were but few:
A Chinaman who wore a queue,
A Frenchman, African, and Jew.
The animals would frighten you:
A llama, and a kangaroo,
An elephant, and caribou,
A cow, dog, owl, pig, cat, and gnu,
Six hens, a rooster, and a ewe,
And more—enough to form a Zoo.

It took them many days to hew
The slender masts of oak and yew.
At last when naught was left to do,
And all had said their last adieu,
The boiler puffed, the whistle blew,
And they were off with small ado.

Far out upon the ocean blue,
Where naught but water greets the view,
A fearful storm began to brew.
The birds up to the rigging flew,
The chickens clucked, the rooster crew,
The frightened cow began to moo,
The dog to bark, the cat to mew.
In vain they hollered "scat!" and "shoo!"
And many missiles at them threw;
The noises only louder grew.
But greater trouble did ensue—
Their coming they began to rue:
A whirlpool in the vessel drew,
The crew declared it nothing new,
A way to reach the land they knew,
So all set off in a canoe.
When food grew scarce, the cock they slew,
And made his flesh into a stew.
They sighted land, took hope anew;
But all were gone but one or two
When land was reached. Alas, 't is true,
The natives boiled and ate them, too.
And now my simple tale is through.

FLORA W. SMITH.

IS IT A YULE LOG?

Ho! what is this that comes rolling in sight?

"It is a Yule log for Christmas!" many of you learned ST. NICHOLAS folks may say. But no; Mr. Meredith Nugent has told me all about it.

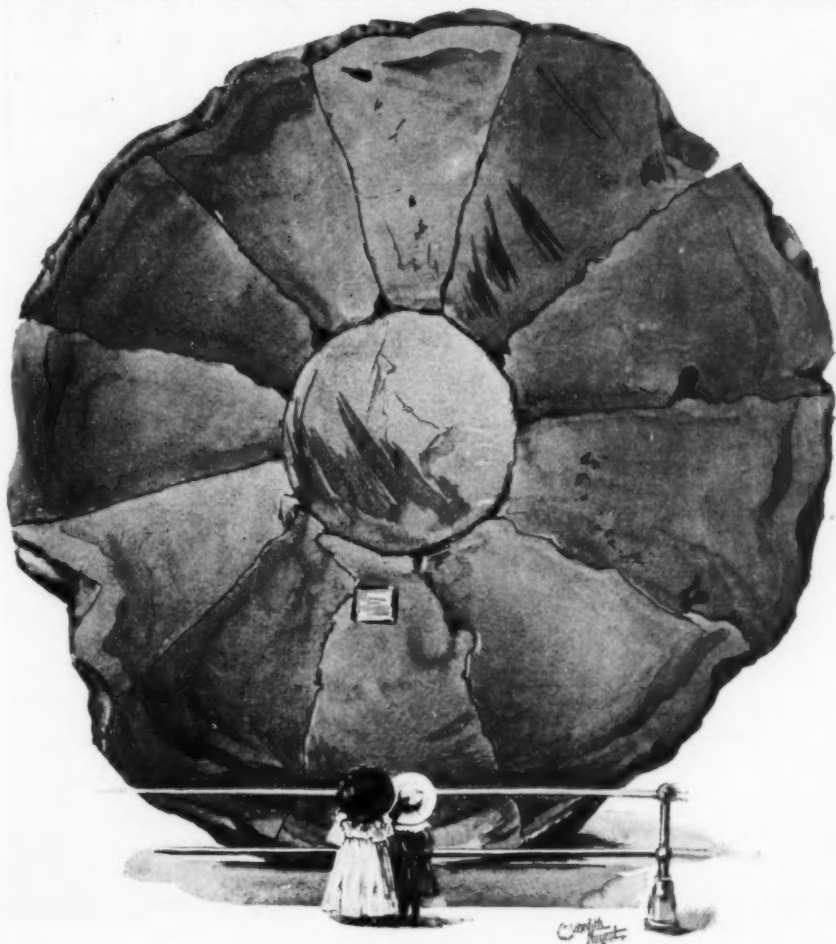
There is no fine open chimney-place in my meadow, in which a great Yule log may be laid to send up its grand, lapping flames, its sparks and crackling cinders; but there always is room for a wonder-picture around which we all may gather—and this is a wonder-picture indeed!

It is only a slice from one of California's biggest trees. But what a slice! Mr. Nugent has drawn it from life, so to speak, as all of my hearers within reach of New York city may testify; for they can see the original any day in the American Museum of Natural History, near Central Park.

I am told that not long ago a giant Sequoia tree—after years of steady growth—lay prostrate in the grove known far and wide as the Sequoia Grove; and a slice was then taken from its mighty trunk, and this slice was sent to New York. The huge round thing could not, of course, be sent in one piece; that would be quite out of the question, for it measured about twenty feet across and sixty feet in circumference. So they divided it into sections; and these sections were brought on by rail, and finally they were put together, each piece restored to its proper place, as shown in Mr. Nugent's drawing. Crowds may now enjoy this sight at the museum, and form some idea of the tremendous girth of that mammoth tree.*

The very young man and woman in the picture may well gaze in rapt astonishment at the huge thing. Who would n't?

* The Little Schoolma'am says you all may read about the felling of this very tree, in ST. NICHOLAS for December, 1892.



NOT A YULE LOG.



CHRISTMAS EVE.



CHRISTMAS EVE, and six children's stockings to be darned before bedtime. Mrs. Chequidden—the children's mother—could n't even *think* of darning more than one of each pair. Each child needed one to hang up for Santa Claus; and wanted that stocking to be in the best of order.

This Christmas eve they had all gone to take tea with their grandmother, and before leaving had begged their mama to be sure and darn the stockings that they were going to hang up in the big chimney-place.

So she took the big work-basket on her lap, and began to search for the little darning-gourd. But the gourd was not in the basket. She got up, and looked here and there and everywhere, but could not find it. At last she sat down and drew a stocking-foot on her left hand. "I must try and darn them this way," she said with a sigh, "but it is harder, and I am very, very tired." And with that she leaned back in her rocking-chair and fell fast asleep. Then there came a chuckle from under the bureau.

"What's that?" asked the darning-needle, with his one eye turned in the direction of the sound.

"It's I," was the answer, and out rolled the little gourd.

"Why did you hide away?" asked the needle.

"I'm tired of being scratched all over while darning stockings," said the gourd. "It's bad enough at other times, but at Christmas time it is *too* much."

"Suppose you had a hundred pins stuck into you at a time, what then?" said the round pincushion.

"Oh, you're so fat that it can't hurt you much," said the gourd.

"Well," said the scissors, "you ought n't to grumble. I have to do much more than you do."

"But then, you see, you have n't been used to anything else," said the little gourd. "But think of me. Once I hung high on a beautiful green vine. Sweet flowers grew all about me—I think I can smell them now. The birds came and sang to me—I think I can hear them now. The butterflies and the bees all nodded to me as they flew by—

I think I can see them now. Oh! how happy I was! And to be taken from that lovely home and thrown into a work-basket, and made to help darn children's stockings, it—it is—it really is too much."

"Stop your grumbling," said the scissors, "and let me talk awhile. If you had been left there what would have become of you? When winter came, you'd have found yourself hanging on a dry, brown rope instead of a beautiful green vine. And you could n't have smelled the flowers, because there would n't have been any flowers; and you could n't have heard the birds, or have seen the bees and the butterflies, because they'd have been gone too. And there you would have hung, a lonely little gourd, rudely shaken by wintry winds."

"Yes," added the darning-needle; "the scissors knows. He was lost outdoors all winter. There is n't much you can tell *him* about a winter in a garden."

"As for the children," said the fat pincushion, "it is a pleasure to do anything for them. They are very nice children. And their mama, too, is just the mama for such children."

"And how neatly she keeps the work-basket," said the scissors. "It's really a pleasure to live in it."

"And what a pity it would be," said the darning-needle, "if the children should come home and find the stockings they want to hang up for Santa Claus, just as they left them, with the same holes—"

"Don't say any more—don't say any more," here broke in the little gourd. "I've heard quite enough. I'm sorry I hid, and sorry I grumbled. I'll roll over and touch our mistress's foot, and she'll wake up and see me, and then perhaps the children's stockings will be darned in time, after all."

So it rolled over and touched the mother's foot once—twice—thrice; and the third time she awoke, and saw the gourd, and saying, "Why, there it is! How glad I am!" picked it up.

And when the children came home from their grandmama's, they found their stockings as good as new, and hung them up in a row.

And Christmas morning, each stocking was stuffed full of Christmas presents!

RHYMES OF THE STATES.

By GARRETT NEWKIRK.

GEORGIA



From England General Oglethorpe
A colony did bring;
And named the thirteenth of the States
For the second George, his King.

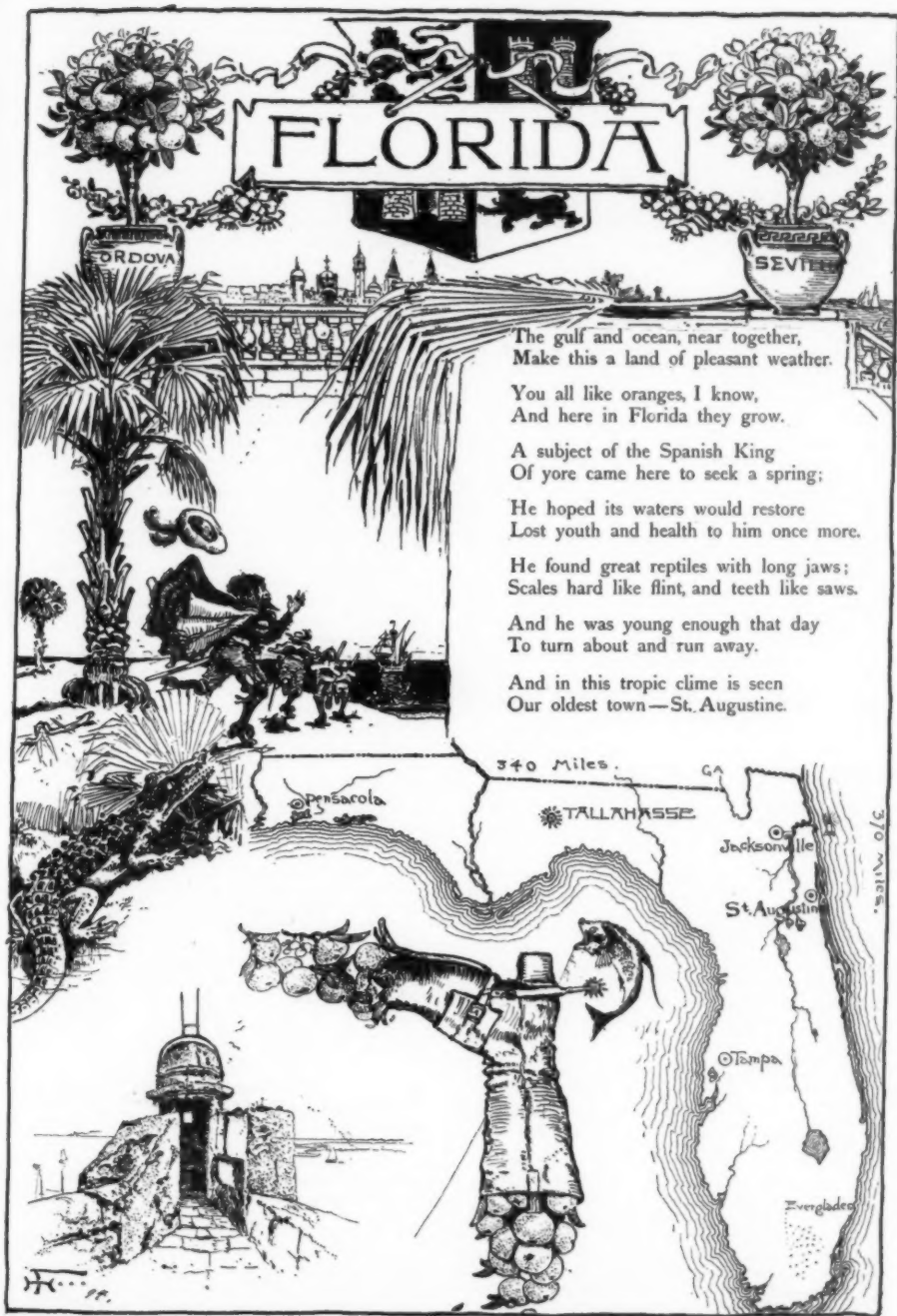
Georgia to-day is often called
"The Empire State of the South";
Savannah's the largest city,
And is near the Savannah's mouth.

All grains are grown in Georgia,
And thousands of cotton-bales;
It is as large as England,
Including also Wales.

The capital, Atlanta,
A city far renowned,
In beauty has arisen,
Though once burned to the ground.



Gen. Oglethorpe.



The gulf and ocean, near together,
Make this a land of pleasant weather.

You all like oranges, I know,
And here in Florida they grow.

A subject of the Spanish King
Of yore came here to seek a spring;

He hoped its waters would restore
Lost youth and health to him once more.

He found great reptiles with long jaws;
Scales hard like flint, and teeth like saws.

And he was young enough that day
To turn about and run away.

And in this tropic clime is seen
Our oldest town—St. Augustine.

THE LETTER-BOX.

VOORHEESVILLE, N. Y.

MY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I want to tell you about the interesting collection I am making. It is of post-marks, and it has helped me in many ways. There are many places that I had never heard of before that through my collection I have learned much about. Then, too, there are such queer names for many of the places, some of which are Painted Post, Kissimee, Birch Tree, and Candiporte. Silver Peak is one that I think very pretty.

I have taken you only two years, but in that time I have learned to love you dearly, and every month, when ST. NICHOLAS arrives, the girls all flock in, and we read you together. Your devoted reader,

ROBERTA D—.

PALMA SOLA, FLA.

DEAR OLD ST. NICHOLAS: We have taken you for eighteen years, though, of course, I have not enjoyed reading you all that time, as I am not quite thirteen; but I like to read you now ever so much.

I have lived in Florida all of my life. My home is on the loveliest river, called Manatee. We have boats, and spend a good deal of time on the water. The river flows into Tampa Bay, and about eight miles across its green waters is what is called Passage Key, a lovely little island bordered on one side by the bay and on the other by the great Gulf of Mexico. The surf-bathing is splendid. One can find any number of the most beautiful shells of every shade, shape, and size on the beaches out there.

Sometimes, as you approach the key, you see hundreds and hundreds of pelicans just covering the shore. The sea-gulls lay their eggs there during the months of May and June, and it is such fun to hunt for them, as the pelicans build their nests right on the ground. The eggs are very good to eat; I think they are quite as nice as hens' eggs.

With wishes for your success always, I am yours appreciatively,
"SWEET CRACKER."

ST. MARTIN'S LANE, WISSA. HEIGHTS,
PHILADELPHIA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have never written to you before, but now I have something interesting to tell you. I have a duck nearly full grown, which I have raised from an egg. The other day I looked out of my window, and saw the duck eating out of the plate with the two cats in the garden. They were not in the least frightened of each other, and went on eating till all the food was finished.

I am very fond of reading you. My eldest sister has taken you ever since you first came out, and I have read every story in all the volumes.

Your little reader, ETHEL S—.

ST. CROIX, LE 15 SEPT., '94, D. W. I.

CHER ST. NICHOLAS: Voilà bien des années que nous lisons, ma sœur et moi, votre intéressant et amusant journal. Nous demeurons dans les Indes Occidentales, loin de cette chère Amérique que nous aimons tant. Nous avons comme distractions votre journal, des promenades magnifiques le long de la mer, deux chiens du nom de "Bijou" et "Jacque" (Jack), et une gentille chèvre que nous attelons à une petite charrette.

L'année passée nous avons été dans votre voisinage, car en allant avec nos parents, notre petit frère, et nos grandes sœurs, à l'Exposition de Chicago nous avons passé par New York. C'était bien joli et merveilleux ce que nous avons vu, car dans notre petite île on ne trouve pas toutes ces curiosités. Si notre lettre n'est pas trop longue, vous nous feriez bien plaisir en l'imprimant. Vos petites lectrices vous envoient le bonjour.

NINA ET EDNA M—.

CHATFIELD, MINNESOTA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I read about racoons in the June number of ST. NICHOLAS, and thought I would tell you about one we have. We are always very fond of pets, and usually have a great many; but we never had one so attractive as our pet coon. We raised it in a curious way. This spring we had an old cat that had one kitten. After a while we found a baby coon in the woods. It was very small, not larger than a very small kitten, and we were afraid that we could not raise it.

We then thought perhaps our old cat would raise it, so we gave it to her. She did not offer to eat or harm it, but seemed much pleased with it, and at once adopted it as one of her family.

Shortly afterward we found a young gray squirrel, and the cat owned that also.

The old cat raised her curious family of a cat, coon, and squirrel, and they are very attractive pets. Every one who comes desires to see them, and after that always wants to see the old cat who so kindly befriended them. The coon is getting very mischievous, and is nicer, I think, than the squirrel. The coon will climb into the very tops of trees. It is great fun to see him and our dog play together. I remain your admiring reader,

MAE M—.

CINCINNATI, OHIO.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I thought I would write to you and tell you about something I saw. A few weeks ago, in walking down Fourth street, we—my sister Charlotte and myself—saw a dog walking along; it was all covered with tags, medals, and checks. I recollected the story in ST. NICHOLAS about "Owney of the Mail-Bags." I said to Charlotte, "I wonder if that is Owney." My sister went up to the dog to see, and she saw "Owney" on the collar. Then we read about him in the paper.

Yours truly, LOUISE P—.

MAXWELL CITY, NEW MEXICO.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am a Hollander, and have read your pieces about my countrymen, and must say that you do not exaggerate as some papers do. There are many foolish and untrue tales told about Holland, and many people therefore get an idea that they are all fisher-folks, and that the tails of all the cows in the kingdom are tied to the ceiling of the stalls. Such things are exceptions, not the rule.

In Holland, school-boys of the same age as those here that have gone to school regularly are further advanced.

Also, the Paris fashions are in vogue there, and educated Hollanders are just as polite as Americans, and perhaps more so.

We must irrigate if we want to raise crops here in New Mexico, and as few of your readers know how it is done, I will describe the process to them.

Firstly, a ditch is taken out of some stream; this ditch must have at least five feet of fall to the mile, as otherwise the ditch would fill with dirt, and from this ditch the water runs into reservoirs to be kept until needed. Out of these reservoirs the water is run into ditches which bring it to the place where it is needed. It is then run into the irrigating-ditches, in which are placed checks—sticks long enough to cross the ditch. Upon these sticks canvas is nailed so that it will hang in the ditch. A little dirt is then thrown on the edge of the canvas to keep it in place. This check stops the water and forces it to flow over the ditch-bank and on the field to be watered. The water is allowed to flow until the ground is thoroughly wet, and is then allowed to flow to the next check. A good big stream of water is needed to irrigate well, as the water must run over any unevenness of the surface.

I have read ST. NICHOLAS for many years, and think it is well worth the money.

Your reader,

PETER M.—

(Printed as it was written.)

SEOUL, KOREA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I live at the American legation in Seoul, Korea. I am eight years old. Harry, who is my brother, is ten years old. I am born in Korea; Harry is born in China. There is a lot of trouble in Korea. Japan and China are at war; the Korean Palace is taken, the King is prisoner; there are Japanese guards all around the palace; there are American soldiers at the legation; not a man can come in without a pass. Two of my favorite soldier friends are Dick and Jack. We have a pony. Now I think I will close my letter.

MAURICE A.—

BURNT OAK, CURRENCY CREEK,
SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: We often see letters in your paper written by children who take an interest in it, as we do; and we think we must write you a letter, too, telling you something about our home and our friends and our pets here in South Australia. We live in the ranges about eighty miles from Adelaide, and when we go by train to town have to cross the "Spider Bridge," as it is called because it looks so light you would not think it strong enough to bear the heavy trains running over. You look out of the carriage window upon such a deep gully below, and then back at the tunnel through which you have just come, for that opens directly upon the bridge; this is when you are going through the Mount Lofty ranges. But we are quite used to it now, and do not mind at all when we are going over. Now I must tell you of our friends. Some of them live in Adelaide and come to spend the summer holidays with us; but our greatest friend down here is Tracy Miller, who lives about five miles from here, in a little town close to the sea and near a lovely beach where we like to have picnics sometimes. Tracy is very fond of horses, like ourselves, and has a pony to ride, but it is not quite broken in yet, and often plays sad pranks. Just, perhaps, when Tracy is in a hurry, "Baby," as he is called, gets an obstinate fit and won't go; but generally he is a dear little thing, and has such a pretty head. Our horses we call "Star" and "Rainbow." Star is a bright bay with black points, and arches her neck. She is very spirited, and will not let any one but myself catch her. We have to live in Adelaide part of the year on account of our lessons, and one evening Star and Rainbow got out of the paddock where we keep them when in town, and started for home. Some

men stopped them, but they would not let any one go close to them, and I was obliged to follow myself and catch them. Rainbow, my sister Isabel's horse, is a dark bay; she is spirited, too, and carries her head very well. Papa has nearly all wire fences down here, for we have a sheep-station; but there is one old brush fence left. A brush fence is a fence made of logs and boughs. Over this we have trained our horses to jump, and they like it as much as we do. Rainbow will stand without being tied wherever she is left, and this is very useful when Isabel and I go out mustering with papa; for sometimes the sheep and lambs are very troublesome, and we have to get off our horses and drive them. We love horses better than anything, but our greatest friends always love the stories about horses you put in sometimes, and only wish they were longer. "Rangoon" was a lovely story. "The Apple of Arabia's Eye" and "How Janet did it" were our favorite ones. We are always pleased when ST. NICHOLAS comes in from the post—we know we shall have something to amuse us.

Ever your interested reader,

MAY W.—

APONY CASTLE, NEUTRAER COMITAT, HUNGARY.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: My sisters have had your magazine every month since 1885. The stories I like best are "Juan and Juanita," "Rikki-Tikki-Tavi," "Tiger!" and "Toomai of the Elephants." I am a little Hungarian boy nine years old. My papa promised me, if I passed my examination well, that he would allow me to shoot. I have three guns, and have shot already one buck, one stag, five hares, one wild boar, and many sparrows and frogs. I have two ponies, one named Tavory that I ride every day, and another one called Lalu that I drive about sometimes. Two years ago I began to make a collection of butterflies and beetles. I should be so glad to exchange specimens from here with any little boy or girl in America who may be doing the same thing. In a valley about an hour's walk from our house we have a trout-pool, and sometimes we go fishing, which is very amusing.

In the winter we live in Budapest, and while we were there this year our villa was partly burned. *Ejen* (long live) ST. NICHOLAS!

Your little friend,

HENRY A.—

CAMPBELL, NEW BRUNSWICK.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I wonder if many of your readers have ever seen a sea-serpent. In a private museum in Boston there is a collection of the skeletons of animals, and among them there is what is supposed to be the vertebrae of a sea-serpent. The specimen is very long, and extends around three sides of a large room. There is no proof, however, as to whether these are real vertebrae; but it is certain that one of these strange animals has been seen.

A good many years ago a serpent was seen off the beach at Nahant. It raised its head about twelve feet out of water, and remained in the same position for about two hours.

A sketch was made at the time, and a paper was signed by the people who saw this remarkable animal. Having seen the picture and the paper makes this incident more interesting for the fact that it is true.

Very sincerely,

K. C. P.—

HANOVER, GERMANY.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am eleven years old, and have taken you as long as I can remember, but I have never written a letter to you, so I thought I would tell you how I found life in a foreign country.

This is the second time I have been here in Germany,

and this time I came to spend my holidays in a boarding-school in the Harz Mountains. This school was kept by a pastor in a little village, so one can imagine how nice it was. I learned to write German very easily, and improved in the language, which I had learned to speak at home. The bauern or peasants are very different from our country people. Over their coat they wear a blue gown, which extends to the waist. The older peasants wear small caps, and instead of long trousers they wear knickerbockers, whereas the younger peasants wear broad-brimmed hats somewhat resembling those of the cow-boys.

Early in the morning the Brocken, one of the highest mountains in North Germany, was covered with mist for almost half-way down, and from a distance it looked very beautiful.

There are a good many old ruined burgs (strong castles) near here. One of the strongest of the burgs belonged to a robber knight, the Count of Regenstein. The foundation of his castle was hewn out of the solid rock. He had a dungeon which was cut out of rock about fifty feet deep, into which he threw merchants whom he had captured and robbed, and they were left there to die of starvation if they could not pay him a certain sum of money. One can see the skeletons and skulls and bones, which are still down in the dungeon, when a lantern is let down. At last he was taken prisoner and kept in a

box about ten feet wide, ten feet long, and six feet high, for two years, in the city of Quedlinburg. The food was given to him through a little window in the side of the box.

The Germans are very fond of making foot-tours in the mountains, and once the professor took a few boys and me for a three days' walking tour.

Your faithful friend,

CHARLES TROWBRIDGE T—.

WE have received pleasant letters from the young friends whose names follow: Estill S., J. Stacey, Adelaide M., Shepherd S., Wm. Scollay W., John C. McK., Marie and Edouard S., Herbert W., Mary Caroline F., Georgia, Elsie and Lois M., Marian L., M. F., Irene S. T., Frederic H. R., R. C., H. M. K., Paul J. P., C. C. H., Edwin E. P., Fannie L. de C., Eleanor H. D., E. C., Floss, Ida, and Maggie G., Clarissa C., Margaret H. W., Sophia S., Lydia L., Dwight E. C., Katharine N., Alvin J., May W. S., John L., Kenneth H., Joan W., Ethel A., Vina S. T., Lillian M. G., May G., Jean D. E., Vera H., E. C. S., Rosamond, Alice O., Rossa S., A. N. G., Ellen M. C., Julia S. H., Emma E., Eleanor G. A., Harriet S. A., Jennie M. H., B. L. B., and Bertha A. Nesmith.



FOOT-BALL AT FROGTOWN—"THE TACKLE."

THE RIDDLE-BOX.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE NOVEMBER NUMBER.

MUSICAL PUZZLE. Mozart. 1. Mandolin. 2. Ocarina. 3. Zither. 4. Accordion. 5. Rebec. 6. Trumpet.

PROGRESSIVE NUMERICAL ENIGMA. Discrimination.

COMPASS PUZZLE. North to south, nucleus; west to east, warlike; northwest to southeast, nobless; southwest to northeast, sculpin.

PL. Like one who lingers yet upon the sands,
Gazing his last upon the fading sail
That bears his friends afar to other lands,
I watch the bleak November daylight fall,
And, weltering in the pale and watery skies,
The dim stars falter forth, the cold moon rises.

PREFIXES AND SUFFIXES. 1. S-lit-a. 2. S-hip-s. 3. Dare-d. 4. D-i-d. 5. S-cent-a. 6. G-on-g. 7. G-an-g. 8. S-lot-a. 9. S-in-a.

TO OUR PUZZLERS: Answers, to be acknowledged in the magazine, must be received not later than the 15th of each month, and should be addressed to ST. NICHOLAS "Riddle-box," care of THE CENTURY CO., 33 East Seventeenth St., New York City.

ANSWERS TO ALL THE PUZZLES IN THE SEPTEMBER NUMBER were received, before September 15th, from Jesse Chapman and John Fletcher—"Three Buckeyes"—"Too Many to Count"—M. McG.—Josephine Sherwood—V. E. L.—Paul Reese—Jo and I—Two Little Brothers—"The Wise Five"—Hubert L. Bingay—"The Quartette"—Blanche and Fred—L. O. E.—Paul Rowley—Wilford W. Linsly—"Tod and Yam"—Ida Carleton Thallon.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE SEPTEMBER NUMBER were received, before September 15th, from Marie Snow, 1—Muriel E. G., 2—Lucetta Dickinson, 2—Victor J. West, 1—G. B. Dyer, 10—Anna Coates, 1—Klara and Alice, 2—C. H. Robinson, 1—Maud and R. C., 1—C. V. Briggs, 1—Ethel M. C., 2—Mary Kent and Mama, 5—"Two Girls in Blue," 2—Caroline L. Bull, 1—Jenn D. Eggleston, 1—"Crab Club," 1—M. E. P., 1—Leonard Keble, 1—Reginald W. Murray, 1—C. K. H. and A. L. H., 8—Rhea, 1—Florence S. Wheeler, 1—W. B. Gill, 1—Carrie and Helen, 2—Katharine D. Hull, 1—E. Wallace Cornish, 1—L. G. L. and G. A. L., 1—Auntie Specs and Betty, 1—Virginia M. Farley, 1—"Siamese Twins," 2—Helen O. Koepfer, 1—Helen Lovell, 6—M. A. D. and P. U. D., 2—W. L., 10—"Dad and I," 2—"Wolverine," 1—Mary Stone, 3—L. and H. Gardner, 1—Jeannette S. K., 1—Two of a Kind, 1—Blanche Millard, 1—L. Adele Carl, 2—Natalie Cole, 1—Claire Hale, 1—"Dr. Jack," 5—"Bumble Bee," 1—Jesse C. P., 1—Virginia J., 1—Ernestine Housel, 1—Mama and Sadie, 9—"We, Us and Co.," 1—Adelaide, Gerald and Adrian, 1—Marguerite Sturdy, 5—Mary V. D. Byram, 1—Lillian Davis, 3—Lotti A. D., 1—"Haddonfield," 1—Robert B. Farson, 3—"We Four," 1—Emory J., 1—Effic K. Talboys, 7—Belle Hume, 2—"Two Smart Little Girls," 1—Mary Pratt, 2—Julia and Deas, 2—Dudley and Minnie, 4—Pearl F. Stevens, 10—"Tattycoram," 1—Laura M. Zinser, 6—"Romeo and Juliet," 2—Oscar Treadwell, 1—Louise Bridgen, 1—Helen Diehl, 1—Caroline Fellowes, 1—Belle and Alison, 5—"The Brownies," 1—Addison Neil Clark, 10—Ada Hocker, 1—Ralph B. Mason, 2—"The Quartette," 7—Marian Lent, 2—Helen L. J., 2—"The Mad Tea-Party," 9—Lois and Elsie Metcalf, 1—Daisy R. Gorton, 3—Polly, 3—Lucille E. Rosenberg, 1—"The Butterflies," 8—"Ana, Mana, Monz, Mike," 2—"Adirondack Party," 10—M. Louise Baldwin, 1—Hattie M., 1—Bessie Crocker, 10—"Mama and I," 6—Mia Olmsted, 2—No name, Garrison, 6—"Two Jersey Mosquitos," 10—R. O. B., 7—Marjory Gage, 5—E. M. Cassels, 1—G. B. D. and M., 10—L. Fletcher Craig, 1—Jennie Liebmann, 10—Geo. S. Seymour, 10—Mable Snow and Dorothy Swinburne, 10—"September Gale," 1—Marjorie E. Bushnell, 1.

FALSE COMPARATIVES.

EXAMPLE: Positive, a boy; comparative, a portable frame for ascending or descending. Answer, lad, ladder.

1. Positive, a want; comparative, a fine varnish.
2. Positive, a support; comparative, seemly.
3. Positive, a salutation; comparative, an arbor.
4. Positive, angry; comparative, a plant used in making pigments.
5. Positive, a kind of meat; comparative, a carpenter's tool.
6. Positive, part of a ship; comparative, a ruler.
7. Positive, a body of water; comparative, to consider.
8. Positive, money earned by labor; comparative, a bet.
9. Positive, a preposition; comparative, to fade.
10. Positive, an uproar; comparative, a hearty meal.
11. Positive, a wrap; comparative, to prance.
12. Positive, a narrow binding; comparative, to grow smaller.
13. Positive, to slide; comparative, a foot-covering.

ALICE I. H.

ZIGZAG.

ALL of the words described contain the same number of letters. When these are rightly guessed, and placed one below another, in the order here given, the zigzag, beginning at the upper left-hand letter, will spell the name of a certain school mentioned in one of Charles Dickens's stories.

CROSS-WORDS: 1. One backward in book learning. 2. A number. 3. A trench. 4. To wash by immersion. 5. A river of Hades whose waters when drunk

NUMERICAL ENIGMA. "If you want learning, you must work for it."

DOUBLE ACROSTIC. Primals, Nausicaa; finals, Penelope. Cross-words: 1. Nap. 2. Are. 3. Urn. 4. She. 5. Ill. 6. Coo. 7. Asp. 8. Ale.

DELETIONS. Thanksgiving Day. 1. Pa-rio-t. 2. W-hi-e. 3. Can-d-id. 4. Car-not. 5. Sin-g. 6. De-ar-ed. 7. A-go-ny. 8. F-in-ish. 9. De-vote-e. 10. Clink-ing. 11. Am-nest-y. 12. Le-gate-e. 13. La-din-g. 14. B-ask-et. 15. Ga-yet-y.

CONNECTED WORD-SQUARES. I. 1. Opera. 2. Paper. 3. Epode. 4. Kedan. 5. Arena. II. 1. Trial. 2. Rabbi. 3. Iscen. 4. Abble. 5. Limer. III. 1. April. 2. Peace. 3. Rabid. 4. Icing. 5. Ledge. IV. 1. Wheel. 2. Hello. 3. Elbow. 4. Elope. 5. Lower. V. 1. Elate. 2. Level. 3. Avoid. 4. Teine. 5. Elder.

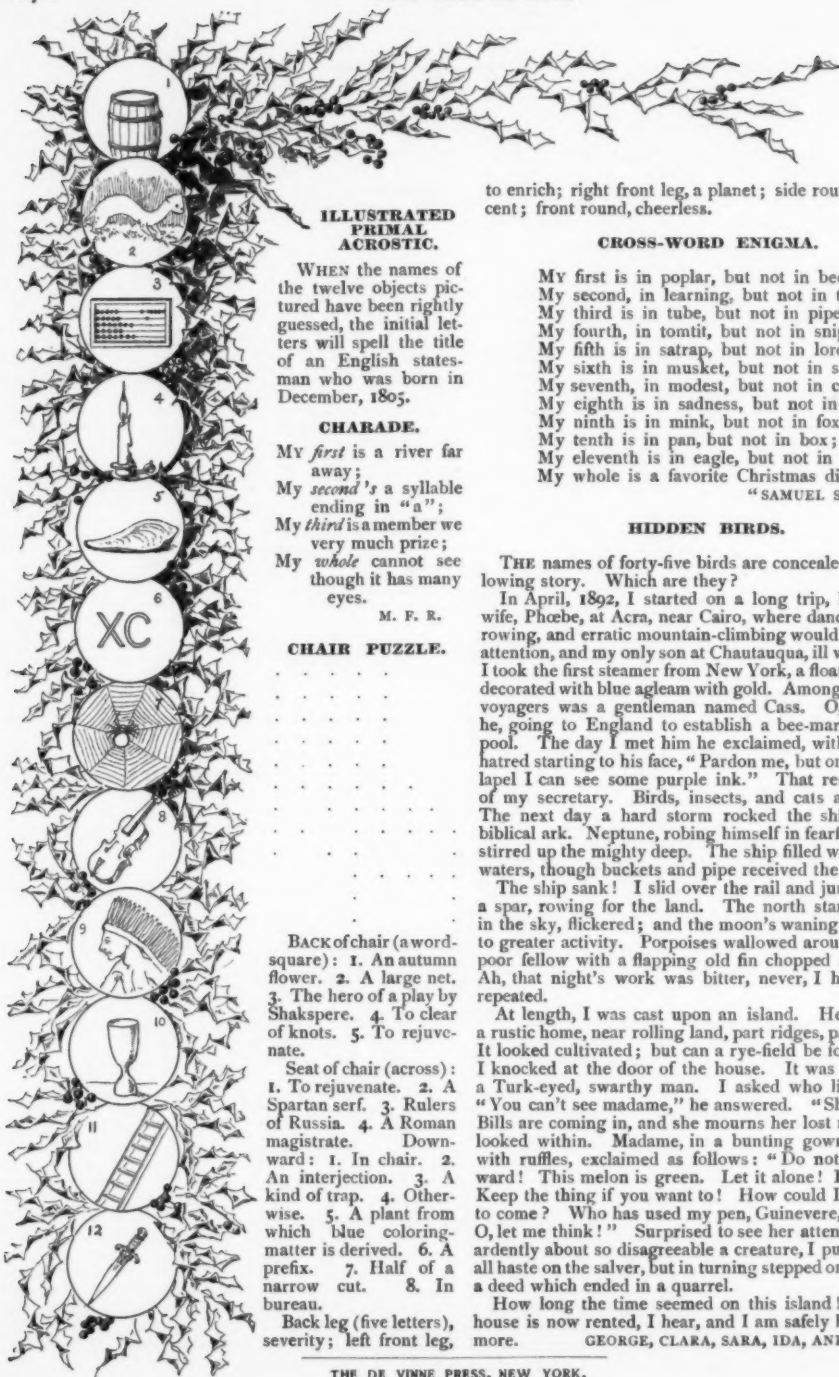
caused forgetfulness of the past. 6. A swimming bird. 7. To verify. 8. An Egyptian gateway to a large building. 9. A large stake driven into the ground as a support for some superstructure. 10. To cut in thin slices. 11. To draw off by degrees. 12. To burn with hot liquid. 13. A hard outside covering. L. W.

DOUBLE ZIGZAG.

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CROSS-WORDS: 1. Justifies. 2. Releases from slavery. 3. Planned. 4. Engines. 5. Smirks. 6. Brings to light. 7. A character in "The Merchant of Venice." 8. Senselessly. 9. The state of being stopped. 10. The principal sail in a ship.

When the above words have been rightly guessed, the letters represented by the numbers from 1 to 10 will spell one of the Presidents of the United States; the letters represented by the numbers from 11 to 20, a saint whose festival occurs on December sixth. F. S. F.



ILLUSTRATED PRIMAL ACROSTIC.

WHEN the names of the twelve objects pictured have been rightly guessed, the initial letters will spell the title of an English statesman who was born in December, 1805.

CHARADE.

My *first* is a river far away;
My *second* 's a syllable ending in "a";
My *third* is a member we very much prize;
My *whole* cannot see though it has many eyes.

M. F. R.

CHAIR PUZZLE.

BACK of chair (a word-square): 1. An autumn flower. 2. A large net. 3. The hero of a play by Shakspeare. 4. To clear of knots. 5. To rejuvenate.

SEAT of chair (across): 1. To rejuvenate. 2. A Spartan serf. 3. Rulers of Russia. 4. A Roman magistrate. Downward: 1. In chair. 2. An interjection. 3. A kind of trap. 4. Otherwise. 5. A plant from which blue coloring-matter is derived. 6. A prefix. 7. Half of a narrow cut. 8. In bureau.

Back leg (five letters), severity; left front leg,

to enrich; right front leg, a planet; side round, magnificent; front round, cheerless.

H. M. A.

CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

My first is in poplar, but not in beech;
My second, in learning, but not in teach;
My third is in tube, but not in pipe;
My fourth, in tomtit, but not in snipe;
My fifth is in satrap, but not in lord;
My sixth is in musket, but not in sword;
My seventh, in modest, but not in coy;
My eighth is in sadness, but not in joy;
My ninth is in mink, but not in fox;
My tenth is in pan, but not in box;
My eleventh is in eagle, but not in fish;
My whole is a favorite Christmas dish.

"SAMUEL SYDNEY."

HIDDEN BIRDS.

THE names of forty-five birds are concealed in the following story. Which are they?

In April, 1892, I started on a long trip, leaving my wife, Phoebe, at Acra, near Cairo, where dancing, music, rowing, and erratic mountain-climbing would occupy her attention, and my only son at Chautauqua, ill with grippe. I took the first steamer from New York, a floating palace, decorated with blue a gleam with gold. Among my fellow-voyagers was a gentleman named Cass. O, wary was he, going to England to establish a bee-mart in Liverpool. The day I met him he exclaimed, with a look of hatred starting to his face, "Pardon me, but on your coat-lapel I can see some purple ink." That reminded me of my secretary. Birds, insects, and cats annoy him. The next day a hard storm rocked the ship like the biblical ark. Neptune, robbing himself in fearful majesty, stirred up the mighty deep. The ship filled with rushing waters, though buckets and pipe received the flood.

The ship sank! I slid over the rail and jumped upon a spar, rowing for the land. The north star, lingering in the sky, flickered; and the moon's waning roused me to greater activity. Porpoises wallowed around me, one poor fellow with a flapping old fin chopped almost off. Ah, that night's work was bitter, never, I hope, to be repeated.

At length, I was cast upon an island. Here I found a rustic home, near rolling land, part ridges, part gullies. It looked cultivated; but can a rye-field be found here? I knocked at the door of the house. It was opened by a Turk-eyed, swarthy man. I asked who lived there. "You can't see madame," he answered. "She's cross. Bills are coming in, and she mourns her lost riches." I looked within. Madame, in a bunting gown, trimmed with ruffles, exclaimed as follows: "Do not clap, Edward! This melon is green. Let it alone! But, paw! Keep the thing if you want to! How could Ira venture to come? Who has used my pen, Guinevere, you or I? O, let me think!" Surprised to see her attendants buzz ardently about so disagreeable a creature, I put a card in all haste on the salver, but in turning stepped on a chick—a deed which ended in a quarrel.

How long the time seemed on this island! But the house is now rented, I hear, and I am safely home once more.

GEORGE, CLARA, SARA, IDA, AND MARY.

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"HE FELT A FEAR TO SEE HER THERE."

(SEE POEM, "THE ELFIN BOUGH.")